

*The Genealogy
of Psychoanalysis*

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To Yorihiro Yamagata

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A Philosophy for Psychoanalysis?

FRANÇOIS ROUSTANG

Does psychoanalysis need philosophy? Until now it may have seemed doubtful. Not that there has been any lack, in recent decades, of works by philosophers attempting to clear a path for themselves in the work of Freud, using it at times to justify or develop their own thought, criticizing Freud's lack of rigor on certain points and his contradictions, or highlighting certain central themes indispensable to an understanding of his work. But most often the specific nature of the analytic experience has not been taken into account by such considerations, with the result that psychoanalysts could take an interest in these developments or admire their subtlety and yet not feel themselves implicated, much less compelled to reexamine the tenets in which their discipline envelops them. To my knowledge, until the present time no one has proposed an original ontology capable at the same time of situating the work of Freud in the philosophical tradition to which it is explicitly linked, that is, in the sphere of influence of Schopenhauer and of Nietzsche, and thereby also bringing into full view the originality of this work insofar as it is susceptible of forming the basis of a practice. In *Généalogie de la psychanalyse*, through the force of his argument and with impressive

clarity, Michel Henry compels us to reread Freud in order to underscore the specificity of his discovery, to strip away the ambiguities in which it has become bogged down and to clear a forward path for a therapy sometimes become impracticable. Such a philosophy indeed seems indispensable to today's psychoanalysis, if in fact psychoanalysis wishes to conceive itself with rigor and perhaps to be practiced correctly. Here, rationality can provide support for an experience which, from the point of view of rationality, may appear the most irrational.

Henry's central thesis, tirelessly reiterated, bears on the radical distinction between representation and life. Representation is incapable of seizing reality, because reality then only offers itself through a visibility in which it reveals itself while at the same time concealing itself. Being is not visible and does not represent itself. Thus whatever partakes of the problematics of subject and object must be declared to be unreality or illusion. In other words, no ontology of representation can be developed except to demonstrate its impossibility: a proposition which is accomplished with Kant. On the other hand, if we cease to conceive of consciousness as experience understood as the relation of a subject to an object, but understand it rather as an appearing to itself or as auto-affirmation, then beneath the phenomenality of the visible, the original essence can be grasped. It is this that Descartes termed the "soul," that Schopenhauer named "body," Nietzsche "will to power," Freud "the unconscious," and what Michel Henry prefers to designate "life," that is to say affectivity, that which is experienced in itself as pure immanence.¹

Is this merely a case of renewing the traditional distinction between intellectual and affective in order to conclude once again, as Western philosophy has always done, that passion, feeling, that is to say the obscure, the blind, the nocturnal must be mastered or repulsed in order for the light of intelligence and reason to be raised, in order that thought may finally become possible? On the contrary, we must assume that this light is empty, since it is incapable of attaining its object and even that it sweeps it aside, while affectivity, through its

capacity to experience itself, is the sole ground of true thought and can be defined as absolute subjectivity.

This does not mean that, by means of feeling, knowledge of reality will become possible, if knowledge is understood as objective and scientific. Life or affectivity knows itself only insofar as it experiences itself, insofar as it affirms itself through the exercise of its force. It cannot therefore communicate its knowledge by "extra-posing" it, for this knowledge would then be no more than life's double or its representation. Life or affectivity would leave its own realm to become other than itself. That life is source and origin inasmuch as it is self-immanence and unbroken subjectivity, has as a result not the broadening of our knowledge and the extension of the domain of science, but on the contrary the recognition of the derivative and unreal nature of all that is produced within the register of representation.

By defining life as immanence and affectivity, Michel Henry knows full well that he will be obliged to respond to some daunting questions. To begin with: if life is already all, if it is the sole force which is sufficient unto itself, why does it need representation? Schopenhauer, having first stressed what is truly at issue, subsequently lost track of his discovery, abandoning affectivity to the night and demanding light from representation, explaining, for example, affectivity by instinct, that is to say by something which is exterior to it. Nietzsche is the one who will attempt a solution to the problem. Dionysus has need of the appearance furnished him by Apollo in order to unburden himself in it. Life is the suffering of a permanent excess which must be represented in tragedy to be appeased, but also to manifest itself in the death of the hero, wherein appearance itself is torn asunder.

Furthermore, if life is pure immanence, how is alterity possible? But this is approaching the question from the wrong angle. The pure immanence of life, that is to say the auto-affection of affectivity, is a question which regards its ontological status. That there should be a multiplicity of beings capable of having relations among themselves does not preclude the fact that the life within each one, in the con-

crete form of passions, of feelings, of sensations, is a self-experiencing of self which, as such, **cannot be communicated**: it remains immanent. Furthermore, the recourse to alterity, on the part of certain philosophers, to underscore the argument that no subject possesses himself, that he is always already another, that he is therefore always foreign to himself, this appeal does not make explicit the nature of this alterity—that is to say, the question of whether or not it remains an alterity of the same nature as the subject of representation has not been resolved. Only the assertion of the auto-appearing of life, as blunt as it may be, is capable of imparting a content to the other and underscores the fact that the register in which it operates has nothing to do with the subject-object relation, and that this last is not capable of accounting for life or of knowing it, as suffering and pleasure.

Such an insistence upon the pure immanence of life, it will further be objected, would amount to forgetting death. But **death belongs precisely to the realm of the objective, it can be seen and verified, and it is thus to be consigned to the world of representation. In the register of affectivity, we do experience death, but only as fear, anguish, or desire.** Now, this is an experience which is proper to each of us, and it is not really communicable, even if each person seeks to transmit it through some form of lament. **One never experiences death as such, but rather life dividing itself, affecting itself in the suffering of separation.**

The insistence with which the auto-affection of life is asserted to be absolute subjectivity might seem to savor of a gratuitous hypothesis or of begging the question: that is of an axiom designed to hold the system together. In reality, it bears upon a common experience, that of extreme suffering which fascinates, from which one cannot separate oneself without fearing loss of self; and which is therefore the absolute, but in the form of the purest facticity. That the crucial experience, that which touches the originary ground, should be that of a suffering which produces pleasure, of a pain inseparable from self-indulgence, is something a psychoanalyst can hear any day of the week. Each person is bound to it, as to the expression of life itself, from which he cannot free himself: from the most banal symptom, an

indispensable suffering which will not lose its hold, to vivifying self-destruction. Among the philosophers, it is Nietzsche who has come the closest in an effort “to designate the horrible depths of things that one hardly dares glance at” (p. 238 below). Absolute subjectivity, since this horrible pleasure is what is most proper to us, without our yet being able to appropriate it or modify it. The subject, that of representation, can only acknowledge it or turn away from it into forgetfulness.

In no case should this auto-affection be confused with narcissism. **Narcissism pertains to the specular, it is the impossible effort of the subject to reunite with himself in his own objectified image.** It is the attempt to regain within the register of representation that which is not of this register, because it is experienced in the passivity of passion or of life. **Life asserts itself without reason and without meaning (because it is foreign to reasons and to meanings), without the possibility of reclaiming itself in the glorification or the lamentation of a self-image (since it knows no images).** Narcissism leads to alternation between self-deprecation and pretension, while auto-affection is not susceptible of reduplicating itself in reflection or in self-contemplation. It asserts itself as does a force in action, it is the experiencing of the full weight of life, upon which encouragements or consolations are of no avail. Admittedly the word *narcissism* is sometimes used, in psychoanalysis, to denote this experience. But this use of the term can only result in confusion, for the same word cannot designate both the closing upon oneself in which what remains of life exhausts itself in preserving itself and in believing in itself, and at the same time the closure of life due to the fact that the world of exteriority is outside it and that it alone can suffer its own excess.

Before we turn to a consideration of Freud's interpretation, we must point out a paradox. This experience of feeling oneself in sensation, sentiment, and finally in suffering which is delight, if it is present from birth in every child of man, can yet be recognized only when intentional consciousness is formed; it can only be conceptualized by him who possesses the instrument of rationality. What is

more, if it cannot be recognized and thought, it is lost, for it is then no longer the act of a human being. This means in consequence that affectivity or life has need of the realm of representation not in order to exist, but in order to be experienced as such. The whole of Michel Henry's work, firmly situated as it is within the domain of rational rigor, is needed in order that the immanence of affectivity may be returned to itself in our culture. The greater the clarity and the rigor, the better will be preserved what radically eludes them. The unreal world of representation is thus an indispensable adjunct to reality. The illusion must protect the truth. This paradox will prove to be the rule. There is no reason to fear that the affective will disappear beneath the onslaught of reason, and a concern for respecting the universe of drives and phantasms should not lead to it infiltrating all constructions of the intellect. In this way, reason would be undone, but without affectivity having found any safeguard. Rather, such a blending would prove fatal to the two protagonists.

Freud does not in fact make an appearance until the final chapter of this work. Its title, however, is not a misnomer, for a lengthy preparation was necessary to demonstrate clearly how psychoanalysis, in spite of its innovation, came into existence weighed down by its inscription in the history of Western thought. This magisterial final chapter is both a dazzling demonstration of the contradictions of Freudianism and a bearing witness to the importance of its contribution. Moreover, it is through a radical critique of the work of Freud that his work finds itself once more grounded in the originality that it was not able to maintain.

The entire development of Michel Henry's thesis hinges on the concept of the unconscious. We know that Freud proposed the hypothesis of an unconscious to account first of all for psychoneuroses and dreams, and secondarily for aberrant phenomena which reveal consciousness as lacunary. The hypothesis of the existence of an unconscious would be capable of reestablishing, in spite of this surface discontinuity which characterizes consciousness, a more fundamental continuity. But this unconscious, which seems to be opposed to consciousness, has as its essential task to make manifest, to reveal

to sight, what first appearances have left hidden. The gesture which leads to the invention of the unconscious thus does not go beyond the traditional problematics of consciousness, fundamentally linked to appearing in the register of representation. If things remained at this pass, the unconscious would perhaps be the opposite of consciousness, but it would retain the same nature as consciousness, that is to say, it would not go beyond the opposition between appearing and disappearing.

The concept of the unconscious assumes an additional aspect. When Freud speaks of infantile experiences, of repressed representations, of drives, etc., he has in mind something quite different than that which pertains to the dialectics of appearance; he speaks of unconscious contents which are of another order. But for want of a distinction between the ontic and the ontologic, between what manifests itself and the fact and the mode of manifestation, psychoanalysis is condemned to empiricism. Unless, once this distinction has been established, we ask ourselves to what type of ontology we are referring. Then it will be perceived that "in virtue of pure phenomenality's structure and its division according to the co-original dimensions of representation and life, the ontological concept of the unconscious also has two fundamentally different meanings, depending on which of those dimensions it refers to" (p. 286). The distinction between what is conscious and what is not will become secondary with respect to what ontologically differentiates representation from life, that is to say, from affectivity.

What then are the two fundamentally different meanings of the unconscious? The first, dependent upon the metaphysics of representation, expresses itself in the forms of presence and absence, the one never proceeding without the other. And, in this case, there is between the conscious and the unconscious a passage and a total reversibility. Whatever is unconscious can become conscious and vice versa. The second meaning has reference to an ontology of life: it asserts that the essence of the psyche resides in "the radical immanence of its auto-affectation," in a closed system within which psychic contents determine each other. To the first understanding there cor-

responds for Freud the possibility for the unconscious to become conscious, to the second the impossibility for the unconscious psychic processes to pass as such into consciousness:

The existence of the second destiny no longer need be explained by some ontic processes invented for that end, by a primary repression that is itself mysterious, nor can it simply be stated as an artificial property of certain drive representatives. Rather, it has its roots in an ontological prescription as a formulation of life's status. Therefore, the Freudian discourse on the unconscious, far from arising solely from the work of analysis and as its result, secretly refers to being's fundamental structures, which it exposes in its own way. (p. 287–88)

With respect once more to the “co-original dimensions of representation and of life,” one can distinguish two senses of the first meaning of the unconscious. One brings us back to the latency of memory, since consciousness cannot, at any given moment, make present to itself more than one representation; the other requires a consideration of the unconscious character of the production of representation. With the first sense, Freud seeks only to preserve the psyche from any physico-biological reduction, by affirming that this latency is of a psychic nature. With the second sense, we touch on something totally different, on the effective unconscious, which is to say “the efficacy of those unconscious thoughts during their unconscious state and thus on unconscious activity” (p. 296). Here, Freud takes a step outside of the Western philosophical tradition: “with the crucial character of ‘unconscious activity,’ the deliberate report of force and power in all its forms outside of representability is prescribed” (p. 297). Thus it is possible to conclude:

The mutation of the Freudian unconscious, ceasing to designate the formal and empty negation of the quality “consciousness,” taking over instead the dynamism of the psyche, the totality of the “processes” that become the “system *Ucs*,” does not mark the fall of the ontological concept into the ontic. Behind the apparent facticity of this concept hides the meaning of “unconscious” (“pure unconsciousness as such”), which aims at the very possibility of action, its mode of being, and finally the original essence of being as life.

But Freud was not able to maintain to its ultimate conclusions the purity of his underlying intuition.² No sooner does he assert that the drive is “activity in its pure form and the principle of all activity” than he draws it back to the realm of representation by declaring that it acquires psychic reality only via the intermediary of its representative. “The unconscious, originally representation's other, now contains representation. The aberrant concept of an ‘unconscious representation’ is born” (p. 298).

Following Freud's text very closely, Michel Henry shows that the Freudian affirmation of the original essence of the psyche is twice aborted, by a reduction “to physical reality and then to representative consciousness” (p. 300). Freud will never cease to oscillate between declaring the foundation of the psyche to be outside the realm of representation and the attempt to draw this foundation back into the field of representation. On the one hand the drive, which is indeed what characterizes the unconscious, can never become the object of consciousness and thus escapes the laws of consciousness, but on the other hand “even in the unconscious moreover, an instinct (*Trieb*) cannot be represented (*repräsentiert sein*) otherwise than by an idea (*Vorstellung*).”³ The rationale for this second proposition is supplied in the continuation of the text: “If the instinct did not attach itself to an idea . . . we could know nothing about it.”⁴ For Freud does not succeed in conceiving of another type of knowledge than that which is provided by the subject-object relation and which passes through representation.

However, there is in Freud another line of thinking, one which accords a key position to affect. He acknowledges that “the affect is the qualitative expression of the quantity of instinctual energy and of its fluctuations.”⁵ The drive, which would only be known, as we have just seen, through the representative which represents it, is yet also known through the affect which expresses it qualitatively. We would thereby have at our command, in order to know the drive which is indeed for Freud the essence of the unconscious, another means than that of representation. This remark is of significance for in this way,

thanks to affect, we would escape from the problematics of representation and of its consequences which all lead back to the impossibility of attaining reality.

Michel Henry goes even further, by posing this question: "Now, . . . is affectivity second in comparison with the quantities of energy that constitute or support the essence of the drive? Or are such quantities in turn the image of fundamental affective determinations?" (p. 308). The answer is explicit in Freud: it is the quantities of the drive which determine the affective tonalities. But it is also clear that of these quantities we know nothing, and that they are, along with the principle of constancy, according to Freud's own statement, a highly speculative hypothesis (p. 309). What is not speculative is the pleasure-unpleasure principle, which pertains to phenomenology. The assumption of a principle of constancy, stating that pleasure is linked to a decrease in excitation, is indeed expressly contradicted in "The Economic Problem of Masochism," wherein it is conceded that pleasure may also correspond to an augmentation of tension and unpleasure to a diminution. But if the principle of constancy is thus assailed, the very notion of a drive becomes a pointless hypothesis, since "its *aim* is to eliminate the state of tension obtaining at the instinctual source."⁶ Thus what remains determinant is the tension to which the pleasure-unpleasure pair is linked, in other words "a dialectics of affectivity" (p. 309). From which Michel Henry concludes: "In the final analysis, even for Freud, phenomenology demolishes the initial speculative schema" (p. 310). If we wish to return to the Freudian text and afford it coherence, it will therefore surely be necessary to conclude that it is affect which founds the drive.

An appeal to the death drive provides us no recourse, for any such drive is not a *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Indeed it is identical to this principle since it has precisely the same function: to return all tensions to a state of inertia, that is to their definitive reduction. Here Freud has embroiled himself in "enormous contradictions" (p. 314), for Thanatos which, like pleasure, aims at the extinction of the pressure finds itself opposed to Eros which increases the level of energy, but which must therefore be placed on the side of unpleasure.

Thus what now constitutes the unconscious, at least that unconscious which is radically distinct from the realm of representation, is nothing other than affect.⁷ But is affect unconscious? On this critical point, it is necessary to quote Freud himself, who is categorical. He has just spoken of the drive, which "can never become an object of consciousness, only the idea that represents the instinct can" and he continues in the following paragraph:

We should expect the answer to the question about unconscious feelings, emotions and affects to be just as easily given. It is surely of the essence of an emotion that we should be aware of it, i.e., that it should become known to consciousness. Thus the possibility of the attribute of unconsciousness would be completely excluded as far as emotions, feelings and affects are concerned. But in psycho-analytic practice, we are accustomed to speak of unconscious love, hate, anger, etc., and find it impossible to avoid even the strange conjunction, "unconscious consciousness of guilt" (*Schuldbewusstsein* 'sense of guilt'), or a paradoxical "unconscious anxiety."⁸

Freud thus distinguishes quite clearly between manners of speaking and correct parlance. Although it is customary to say (we now know why: the result of a useful confusion) that affects are unconscious, this phrase is quite simply false. What we should say, according to Freud, and what is quite different, is that "it may happen that an affective or emotional impulse is perceived but misconstrued."⁹ It should be noted that it is not only affects that are in question here, but also feelings and emotions. It is thus the whole of affective life which is evoked and which, strictly speaking, cannot be characterized as unconscious.

In this passage, the importance of which is denied by no commentator, it is clear that the attribute of "unconscious" applies either to the drive or to the representation. But if, on the one hand, as has been demonstrated, the drive is a postulate which is not needed in order to account for affectivity and if, on the other hand, as has been stated above, representation is unconscious only in that it may not be present to consciousness at a given moment—a situation which did not unduly preoccupy Freud and which he designated with the term

preconscious—it must be concluded that the unconscious does not exist (p. 315) or, to put it less bluntly, but not less categorically, that one can speak of the unconscious only in careless speech.¹⁰

The fact that the unconscious does not exist does not for a moment signal the destruction of psychoanalysis. Quite the contrary. In the first place, if the fact is proven, it would be very much in the interest of psychoanalysis to accept the verdict of the most elementary rationality, that which is content to read the texts and to make each speak in relation to the others. For a discipline which prides itself on being centered on language, it would be peculiar to ignore all remarks on the incorrectness of the terms which lie at its foundation. What is there to fear from rigor, if not that it will apply a brake to the senseless prattle which shields itself with a pretension to scientificity? If certain critics do have the intention of discarding psychoanalysis, this is in no way the aim of Michel Henry; he has no score to settle, no revenge to take. Rather he is concerned with establishing, in all its force, the originality of the work of Freud, by unburdening it of its contradictions and incoherences. Far from wishing to make everything disappear along with the concept of the unconscious, he defines its essence as identical to affectivity, understood as the auto-affirmation of life. Furthermore, the distinction steadfastly maintained between “the co-original dimensions of representation and life” (p. 286) should have a number of not insignificant consequences for analytic theory and practice.

Certain mysterious postulates of the *Metapsychology* could thereby receive an obvious sense. For instance, the absence of contradiction in the unconscious is easy to understand if it is affectivity which is in question. Its realm clearly does not partake of the principle of identity which governs correct speech. It eludes sense and meaning, since these last belong to the world of representation and presuppose it. Moreover, affectivity is contradictory in itself, not only because its essence lies in this suffering which is pleasure, but because the self-experiencing of self does not call forth any self, because its subjectivity gives rise to no subject which does not disappear into its very auto-affirmation. Affectivity has no knowledge of time, because it is foreign

by definition to discursivity and, if it is destined to repetition, it is quite simply because it knows only the present of its affection. And so it is with all the concepts elaborated by the “witch metapsychology”: their appearance of fiction vanishes provided one makes the effort to evaluate them in light of the structure of affectivity which underlies them and produces them.

There is another illuminating consequence of assimilating the unconscious to affectivity. Psychoanalysts are well aware that insight and becoming-conscious (“prise de conscience”) does not in itself produce true transformation, that it is not enough to speak in order for existence to change. As the *Language of Psychoanalysis* says, in all its faithfulness to Freud, concerning affect: “It is only when the recall of the memory brings about the revival of the affect which was originally attached to it that recollections can be effective as therapy.”¹¹ This follows directly from the primacy of affectivity over representation, of the “subordination of intellect to life,” as Freud expressed it. “Does not the cure itself demonstrate that the representation of one’s situation, its conflicts and their history, is useless so long as the precondition of that consciousness, a modification of life, does not occur?” (p. 316). The insight, the becoming-conscious is therefore limited, in conformity with the very nature of affect, to the passage from the “misconstrued” to the “perceived.”

That affectivity, which is the essence of what will continue for quite some time yet to be called the “unconscious,” is ontologically separated from the register of representation, and thus of language, does not preclude, from the ontic point of view, the possibility of communication between the two realms. But it presupposes, contrary to certain assertions, that language be considered in psychoanalysis as nothing more than the servant of affectivity, “of feelings, emotions and affects”; that it be nothing more than the place in which affectivity discharges itself; that language allow the force of affectivity to become manifest through itself, though for language this will never be more than an appropriated force.

This amounts to restoring to a central position what Freud termed “abreaction” when he employed the cathartic method. When affectiv-

ity has been checked, when the emotions and feelings have been unable to express themselves in any way, the life of the individual is paralyzed. It is then essential in psychoanalysis to cause the emotions, feelings, sensations, affects to be relived through the transference, that is in the relation to a substitute for those persons who forbade the affective reactions necessary to life. We know that Freud, disappointed by the ineffectualness and the limits of recollection, and thus of insight, returned explicitly to abreaction, when he spoke of "working-through." But it must be emphasized that his disappointment with respect to recollection was inscribed in the very fact that recollection is located within the register of representation. Pure recollection is ineffectual because it does not actively engage the unconscious as affectivity.

What does activate the unconscious is the transference, which is defined as an "intense emotional relationship"¹² "in the nature of falling in love."¹³ When it is a question of accounting for this phenomenon, we see arising once again from Freud's pen the oscillation between two types of explanation, following the two registers of representation and of life. This is particularly striking in the final chapters of the *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* which summarize all of the previous results. Sometimes Freud vaunts the merits of becoming-conscious and of interpretation, sometimes he appeals to the personal influence of the physician and to "indirect suggestion." By rediscovering the anticipatory representations (*Erwartungsvorstellungen*) on the one hand,¹⁴ and by suggestion on the other hand, one can dissolve transference. Other texts are less optimistic, for instance *The Question of Lay Analysis*. Herein are discussed the patient's resistances, that is to say "all the forces that oppose the work of recovery."¹⁵ Here, all oscillation has ceased. In the struggle against resistances, "the task of making interpretations" disappears, and "the intellectual content of our explanations" is ineffectual. "The personal influence" of the analyst, "the suggestive influence, . . . as a motive force" alone is effective.

But what are the specific characteristics of these resistances? They are none other than what defines the essence of affectivity. Freud

identifies three of them: "the benefit derived from the illness," that is, attachment to the suffering in which each of us finds his identity; "the unconscious feeling of guilt" deriving from the reversing of the omnipotence of the superego, that is to say, the egoism of pure immanence; and "primal anxiety," or the impossibility of fleeing the burden of existence. And these resistances culminate in the transference which "gives the impression of being a pathological phenomenon."¹⁶ Following Michel Henry, we can therefore assume that there is resistance because affectivity is by nature self-enclosed. It is resistant to interpretation, not by virtue of some presumed will but by its very nature, inasmuch as it cannot estrange itself in that which is not of its own register, and which is ontologically outside of it. There is resistance only from the point of view of representation. From the point of view of affectivity, it is simply impossible that it be other than what it is.

In order to effect a change, it is of no avail to call upon the intellect, which is powerless; the only effective force is that of personal influence, which is itself a drive-force, and thus of the same nature as the force to be altered. It goes without saying that there is no question of provoking in analysis a confrontation of a type common in social relations: a struggle for prestige in which each of the adversaries is above all concerned with preserving or enhancing the image that he has of himself. Between this sort of confrontation and the one that must occur in analysis, there is as much difference as there is between narcissism and affectivity's self-experiencing of self. Which is to say that confusing the two would amount once more to not yet having grasped the fundamental distinction between representation and life.

It may well be that this relation of force to force confronts the philosopher with a difficult question with respect to the affirmation of the pure immanence of affectivity. Immanence partakes of the ontological status of life, but nothing prevents us from saying, from the ontic point of view, that affectivities can affect one another. Furthermore, the fact that the affectivity of one individual might be affected by the affectivity of another in no way alters the nature of the

affectivity, in which the experienced will remain forever self-enclosed in an experiencing of self.

Whatever may prove to be the outcome of this philosophical debate, it is important to retain the fact that affectivity has its own mode of knowledge. Precisely because one finds oneself outside the register of representation and therefore of language, in its own specificity, it is difficult to speak of affectivity. But this should not deter us from attempting approximations. On the subject of telepathy, Freud makes the hypothesis of a process which "would consist in a mental act in one person instigating the same mental act in another person."¹⁷ And he invokes an "original, archaic method of communication between individuals," of which we might form an idea from "the common purpose . . . in the great insect communities," in "passionately excited mobs" or yet again in "the mental life of children." He then concludes, drawing upon a study by Dorothy Burlingham, that what one sees in the course of an analysis is indeed this sort of communication which takes place between a mother and child.

In this passage Freud follows his natural penchants. What interests him above all is the fact that thoughts are transmitted. Again representation? Freud does not linger long over the medium of this transmission—that is instinct, passion, love. Now, the abovementioned figures of the animal, the crowd, and the child of course refer in each case to what is the essence of life and of affectivity. If there is direct communication, that is to say, without the intermediary of representation, it is because it is a question here of another mode of knowledge, that of affectivity which knows itself and recognizes itself in the other. Transmitted thought is no more than one particular example of this phenomenon, which should not be cause for astonishment; what is astonishing is that there is only from time to time a thought which is recognized as having been communicated, when in fact it is the whole of affectivity on both sides which falls into synchrony. A situation of this sort can be seen any day between a mother and her small child; each of them acts on and reacts to the other, perceiving without need for words each uneasiness, anxiety, or mood. Here language is useless or mendacious in comparison to what

takes place and what is transmitted. If language proves useful or true, it is because it is the pure translation of affectivity. There is in fact a language of this sort, one which does not conform to the rules of speech, understood in its strictest sense, "if speaking means intentionally creating signification with the inner awareness of doing so" (p. 295). It is the language of madmen, of children and, if they can be imagined, of primitives.

All of these are characterized by immersion in affectivity. A delirious man does not know what he is saying and it is not even a language which signals but rather one which speaks the affect of which the speaker wishes to deliver himself or with which he seeks to affect the other. Neither does the small child know what he is saying, nor has he the intention of saying it, on certain occasions when he says without reflection and without regard for propriety, what has affected him coming from his mother or his familiars. Unspeakable things come out of the mouths of babes, and adults refuse to hear them, for these words bring them back to their own horror. Children must be taught to hold their tongues and to speak judiciously, that is, to skirt around what is affecting them. But what is affecting them? The horrors that their parents tell them with words that have nothing to do with these horrors. One need only say "it's a nice day" or "the earth is turning," for the intonation, the inflection, and the rhythm to cause the child to perceive what is issuing from the affectivity of the adult: hatred, love, revenge, the desire for incest or murder. If the child has not learned to be on guard, if he has not yet entered fully into the world of representation, he will immediately translate the affect into words. He does this so well because he does not know how to speak, that is, how to "intentionally create signification with the inner awareness of doing so" (p. 295). It is he who translates the affect which has affected him coming from the adult who, for his part, has become incapable of such a primitive or animal speech—except when he is in a highly emotional state.

The psychoanalytic cure has no other aim but regaining the use of this primitive speech under the effect, on the one hand, of the fundamental rule which suspends intentionality, and, on the other hand, of

the passion implied by the transference, which takes no consideration of the analyst's reality but is concerned only with itself and its affirmation. It is the analyst who has provoked this situation, by his silence, by his waiting, by his refusal to take what is said in the context of socialized language. But this disorganization of the speech of the analysand, this "unspeaking" ("*déparole*") which is answered by the absence of speech or the disorganizing speech of the analyst, have the effect of placing both within the register of affect. Affect against affect, passion against passion, force against force, strength against strength. Between the patient and the analyst there is indeed an "intense emotional relationship . . . which is not to be accounted for by the actual situation" and which is the dynamic "agent of the hypnotic *rapport*."¹⁸ There is hypnosis, because the register of representation has been lulled to sleep. But this hypnosis overtakes both the analysand and the analyst, albeit in a different fashion, for both have entered into a game of affects and thus of forces. The hypnotizer is hypnotized in his turn, failing which nothing happens. This means that his force is essential to the experience, for the only means by which the analysand can enact his own force, of which his neurosis is the paralysis, is to encounter another force in action. If both the one and the other succeed in placing themselves at the level of affect, that is, of affecting and of being affected, of being moved by love, hate, revenge, horror, then abreaction becomes possible—or "working-through" or revival—and consequently the modification of affectivity and of life, of the relation of each of the two participants to affectivity and to life.

The sole advantage of the analyst—and what allows him to call forth the experience—is that he has already passed, first as analysand and later as analyst, through this same experience and that he is presumed to fear it less than his patient. But the outcome is never decided in advance. The analyst has only the advantage of similar experiences, and not of this one in particular with this analysand. If the essence of affectivity is auto-affirmation, always in relation with itself, it escapes, by its very being and by definition, all generalizing categories; it is always singular. And it is for this reason that each analysand can with reason be convinced that his analyst is his alone,

for the experience they live together is indeed unique. The generalization is all the easier to make in that nothing has happened.

The psychoanalyst's advantage has an additional dimension. He has experienced the enactment of his force and he has succeeded in expressing it, has been compelled to express it. This will not exempt him from having to start all over again, endlessly, for each analysand claims the right to affect the analyst in such a way that the analyst can come to say by what sort of affect he has been touched, in order to permit the analysand to express it in his turn. Freud has perfectly described this phenomenon of passage from one unconscious to another in his "Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psychoanalysis," (*SE* 12, 111). The psychoanalyst must make use of his unconscious, let us now say of his affectivity, as of an instrument capable of receiving the impressions which come to him from the affectivity of the patient, in order to translate them into words.¹⁹ The interpretation will thus in no way be a superimposed encoding (as often occurs in the work of Freud himself), but rather a pure transposition of what has been felt. To interpret is to give voice to the affects of the analyst, which are presumed to be those of the analysand. But given that the purification of the analyst, an ideal cherished by Freud, who aimed at being a pure mirror, will never be achieved, the interpretation will be but a provisional approximation, having no other aim than the progressive apprenticeship of the exact speaking of the affect by the analysand. The speaking is indispensable, in order that the affect may become human and not remain animal or primitive; that it not remain only a cry or a symptom. But as it is never exact, the process of this play of forces begins anew, until such time as the affect is sufficiently appropriated that it no longer needs to be spoken.

The modification of affectivity, that is to say, the change anticipated from the analysis, lies not only and perhaps not foremost in the speaking, but directly in the transformation of the confrontation of forces. The intense emotional relationship presents itself at first, at the beginning of an analysis, as the repetition of the forms of emotional relations habitual to the analysand. Now, these are the affective relations which characterize his neurosis. The analyst is thus placed in the position which allows the patient to affect in his customary

manner. To begin with, the analyst can only accept this position, in order that it may be relived, abreacted, worked-through by the analysand. But there comes a time when the relationship is sufficiently strong for the analyst to play upon it and to change position, that is to say to refuse to carry the repetition any further. He will do this via a strategy of ruse, of detour, and of paradox, going as far as to threaten breaking off relations, which can be understood as presenting the following dilemma: either you change, or you leave. Like love, but unlike passion, the transference can in no way be unconditional.

These remarks, which could be expanded, aim to demonstrate that if Michel Henry's book appears to offer nothing of use to psychoanalysts who would see their discipline as a science, it will prove of great value to those who seek to base their practice on a more solid rational foundation. For these psychoanalysts, reading Henry's book is imperative. Paradoxically, it is through returning to what he calls "life," and what we know under the name of "affect," its position as founder of the psyche, that he unburdens our minds of a complicated mythology which mixes the best and the worst, the essential and the useless. We will henceforth be in a position to reread the work of Freud, having at our disposal an authentic Ockham's razor, to place to one side what within it is inspired intuition or imaged transposition of the thing which concerns us and of which it is so difficult to speak; and to the other all that is a return to the indefatigable effort of Western philosophy to draw everything into the iron grip of representation.

Michel Henry is not a gravedigger; his critique is rather that of the connoisseur who knows how to separate the chaff from the wheat:

In the final analysis, in its transcendent constructions and its best phenomenological texts, Freudianism holds deep within it what our era most lacks. That is undoubtedly the reason—despite its theoretical uncertainties, contradictions, even absurdities—for its strange success. (p. 7)

A more eloquent homage could not be paid the work of Sigmund Freud.

The Genealogy of Psychoanalysis

A Belated Heir

When a form of thought seems to be growing old and nearing its end, we should question not its uncertain future but the long process of its maturation and coming to light to read there the omens of its destiny. A genealogy of psychoanalysis will instruct us about its fate more surely than its present successes or failures can. And when psychoanalysis, its therapy's usefulness ever more contested despite its popular audience, already wears the drab uniform of ideology, philosophy must explain the causes behind this decline by examining its theoretical corpus, initially presented as a total revolution in the manner of understanding man's most intimate being¹—his psyche—and thus as the reversal of philosophy itself, at least in its traditional form.

But this reversal is undoubtedly the principal illusion of psychoanalysis. The reasons for its slow ebb are not its own, and we would be wrong to impute them to it. Psychoanalysis is not a beginning but an end, the end of the long history of Western thought, of its inability to grasp the only important thing, and thus its inevitable decomposition. Freud is an heir, a belated heir. We must rid ourselves not just of Freud but of that more weighty and distant heritage. The pre-

suppositions that guided, or rather misled, classical philosophy—which Freud unwittingly and unwillingly reaped and brought to fruition—must be questioned. Indeed, the following investigations would not have been undertaken if I wanted merely to declare my dissatisfaction with a particular doctrine. It is more important to bring to light the unthought ground from which this doctrine proceeds, for it determined nearly everything that came before Freud and will, if we don't take care, determine everything that may come after.

When did the concept of the unconscious make its appearance in modern thought? *Simultaneously with and as the exact consequence of the concept of consciousness.* Descartes introduced the concept of consciousness, in our sense of the word, no longer a moral consciousness or conscience related to the manner of judging man and his dignity, the evaluation of his place on the ladder of beings and in the cosmos. Man was then only one reality whose characteristics, especially the most eminent ones, had to be recognized. Descartes, on the other hand, gave the concept of consciousness its ontologically radical significance, in which that concept designates appearance considered in itself—not just some thing but the principle of every thing, the original manifestation in which everything that can exist comes to be a phenomenon and so into being for us.

Descartes introduced the concept of consciousness at such a depth, however, that its primal importance could not be preserved or truly perceived, not even when taken up again by contemporary phenomenology, which claimed to develop it fully—not even, I would say, by Descartes himself. Has enough attention been paid to the oft-repeated fact that the cogito is fulfilled only with the *epochê* of the world,² with the exclusion not only of everything that is but of the phenomenality of the world as such, that is, the ecstatic dimensionality from which thought borrows its possibility, and with which it has coincided ever since the Greeks? What Descartes sought so passionately is therefore obtained not as the opening of an openness ordained by an original nature,³ or in the form of Plato's *idea*, or in that of the so-called Cartesian perception or the representation of the

moderns—but precisely by rejecting them, by apprehending it as their wholly other, ek-stasis's wholly other. For Descartes, "I think" means anything but thought. "I think" means life, what the author of the second Meditation calls "soul."

Unfortunately, Descartes's scientific aim—or rather his philosophical pretension, perfectly legitimate in itself, to ground science by ensuring its preconditions and thus giving it an absolutely certain foundation—was superimposed upon the original project, turning it away from its true aims and finally pushing it into oblivion. The effort toward a radical phenomenology, capable of discerning at the very heart of pure appearance and in the phenomenality of the visible a more profound dimension where life attains itself before the advent of the world, fell short. The extraordinary fact that the concept of consciousness, stepping onto the philosophical stage, mysteriously doubled itself and designated both the visible and the invisible, that more ancient revelation arrived at only by the *epochê* of the world, had implications that instead of provoking crucial research, were simply lost. And so began the historical deviation that abandoned the path toward the *beginning* while the "philosophy of consciousness" engaged itself in the opposite direction, moving toward the world and its knowing, to a transcendental theory of knowledge and science, which in turn made possible the mastery of things and the universe of technology. Is it any accident that precisely Kant—raising the philosophy of consciousness (as an ontology of representation; that is, of experience understood as the general rapport between subject and object) to an elaborate theory of the objective universe—systematized the critique of the Cartesian soul, definitively foreclosing to contemporary thinkers access to what constitutes both our innermost being and its original essence?

Since Freud, as he says, borrows his concept of consciousness from the philosophical tradition (i.e., from common sense: "There is no need to characterize what we call 'conscious': it is the same as the consciousness of philosophers and of everyday opinion")⁴ and since the Freudian *Bewußtheit* explicitly designates representational consciousness,⁵ the affirmation that psyche's depths escape such a

consciousness (since they do not initially or habitually propose themselves in the light of ek-stasis as the outside of any exteriority whatever),⁶ in short, the affirmation of an unconscious, takes on immense ontological import. It states that the original essence of being escapes the center of visibility where scientific and philosophic thought has sought it ever since the Greeks. In a philosophy of consciousness or nature that reduces phenomenality to the transcendence of a world, the unconscious is the name of life.

The philosophically imitative element of Freud's work is here obvious. For it was Schopenhauer who put an abrupt end to the reign of representational metaphysics, declaring that it exhibits nothing that can claim real being or true existence and emphasizing that crucial assertion with a second, no less essential: the being that never becomes object of or for a subject and, by this absolute refusal of obstacle, defines reality, is life. The interpretation of being as life is the crucial event in modern culture, the moment when it returns to the beginning and once again presents itself with the means to join it.

It is necessary to assess what Schopenhauer's invention, repeating that of Descartes, made possible. In a philosophy of life, the fundamental determinations of existence are foregrounded: body, action, affectivity. Such a philosophy takes into consideration the very soil in which thought grows. Indeed, in Schopenhauer, there emerges a new thematic of corporeality, instinct, sexuality, love, shame, cruelty, and even those particular yet crucial problems posed, or rather played out, on this level—"dramas," Politzer would have said—such as the way lovers choose each other.

But the definition of true being as representation's wholly other (what never shows itself in representation) escapes speculation and arrives at the actual position of Schopenhauer's will only if that "other" reveals itself in itself in its own kingdom. If not, irrepresentable being becomes mere Kantian noumenon, a speculative entity, which German idealism does its best to reabsorb into thought (i.e., once again, into representation), allowing it by that very fact to escape once again. Only a truly radical phenomenology capable of grasping life's essence and original appearance can, by tearing that life

from the fantasies and myths of an afterworld,⁷ hold life where it is: in us, as what we truly are.

Schopenhauer lacks the philosophical means to construct this radical phenomenology. But he does brilliantly establish the impossibility of ever perceiving representation's other in representation and then designates primal corporeality as its site of accomplishment and simultaneously as what identifies us with it. Kantian theory, however, by reducing inner sense (i.e., absolute subjectivity) to the ek-stasis of time and so to representation, prevents Schopenhauer from giving phenomenological meaning to the immanence that ultimately defines Will. Once again, will stands yoked to Western thought, submitted to its destiny, that of producing itself in the light of temporal ek-stasis or sinking into night: either representation or unconscious. Life is lost the moment it is named, and Freud is already there in his entirety.

With Nietzsche, on the other hand, a radiant thought flares forth, returning life to appearance and its own essence. As a precondition, one crucial step must be made: appearance must finally be recognized in the nonecstatic dimension of its initial and eternal coming into itself—which is the eternal return of the same, which is life.⁸ Not denying anything to the splendor of the world and the ecstatic appearance celebrated in Apollo, but because the phenomenon is perceived on the ground of its beginning possibility, on the "screen," says Nietzsche, of the original night that gives it birth—in Dionysus, therefore—being itself is finally taken for what it is, not an unconscious that is nothing, but its own pathos, its eternal and irremissible self-experiencing in the endless play of its suffering and joy.

On the basis of that radical phenomenology, Nietzsche sketches an ontology that discovers affectivity as the revelation of being in itself, as the material from which it is made, as its substance and flesh. And that ontology in turn permits the decoding of the blinding figures of life: the strong, the noble, the animals—all those who have confided their destiny to the speaking of an original suffering. It also clarifies the essential displacement, glimpsed but not clearly conceptualized by Schopenhauer, that bases all representational faculties

(the eye, memory, thought) not on the power of intentional consciousness but on life.

After that, a philosophical reading of Freud is possible. Is not what psychoanalysis primarily requires in its essential analyses, as in its therapy, the subordination of representational thought (perceptions, images, memories, and dream, symbolic, aesthetic, and religious productions) and all its contents to a power of another order? Is it not constantly the implicit rejection of a metaphysics of representation? Is it not life, that subjacent agency, operating and repressing—and what is more, life in its proper phenomenological essence, affect consubstantial with and inseparable from phenomenality, *affect that is never unconscious*? Placed at the heart of the unconscious, affect determines the unconscious as essentially and basically phenomenological.

To rid ourselves of this paradoxical reduction of the unconscious to the site of phenomenality's emergence, is it enough to observe that even if affect's destiny always determines that of representation, affect nevertheless does not constitute the system's ultimate cause—never being, in Freudianism, anything but the drive's psychical representative? Because drive in turn merely represents in the psychical apparatus the energy determinants that the *Project* of 1895 had fixed in a theory, do we not find ourselves inevitably led to these natural processes, the energy determinants? It is unimportant that inextricable difficulties present themselves in this unavowed return to a metaphysics of representation, that the psyche whose specificity it claims to defend is revealed to be nothing more than an equivalent, the ersatz, of a biological or even a physicochemical essence. The scientific explicative schema has reclaimed its rights, dismissing phenomenology once more. The life we live is only an effect of what we do not know. It is up to knowledge, to science, to deliver us progressively from the illusion that we are: this is the eternal thought of the Occident!

But how much the afterworld placed behind life to explain it resembles that life! Does it not borrow all its characteristics from life? The "excitation" invested in the double neuron system of the *Project* is merely the name of affection, that is, of phenomenality. The "ex-

ogenous" excitation is the transcendental affection (of "living tissue") by the world; the "endogenous" excitation, and thus its self-excitation, is the self-affection that constitutes absolute subjectivity's original essence as life. Restored to the somatic basis of drives, affectivity is actually restored to itself, explained by itself. Moreover, we will see that if the principle of inertia is invincibly changed to that of constancy, if the system cannot completely rid itself of its quantities of energy, it is because, as self-affection and self-impression, being nothing but this never-ceasing self-impression, life, precisely, cannot rid itself of itself.

This is why the entropic schema finally recedes before life's tireless coming into itself. The discharge of affects as well as the insurmountable pressure of the unemployed libido merely designate life's subjectivity when self-experience is carried to the limit, to the point of becoming insupportable. And the anxiety that Freud described so well, the common denominator of all affects, is in turn merely the anxiety of life's inability to escape itself. In the final analysis, in its transcendent constructions and its best phenomenological texts, Freudianism holds deep within it what our era most lacks. That is undoubtedly the reason—despite its theoretical uncertainties, contradictions, even absurdities—for its strange success.

Psychoanalysis therefore does not belong to the body of the sciences of man to which it is now attached and from which it will here be carefully dissociated. It is, rather, the antithesis of those sciences. When objectivity ceaselessly extends its reign of death over the devastated universe, when life has no refuge but the Freudian unconscious, and when a living determination of life acts and hides under each of the pseudoscientific attributes with which that unconscious clothes itself, then we must say that psychoanalysis is the soul of a world without soul, the spirit of a world without spirit.

But life will not put up with this ill-fitting mask for long. No situation is more repugnant to its essence than that of an afterworld. It will not long accept having a law outside itself. Life is its own proper law, to which it submits constantly as to that which it is, namely being's pathos and suffering—which is life. That is why the

time for it to throw off this mask is coming soon and perhaps is already here.

What sort of story is being told here? That is what we must finally make clear. Freudianism is often presented as the individual's empirical history in which what happens and what will happen result largely from what has happened, from the individual's childhood, from his relation with the father, the mother, from the trauma of his birth, and so on. What makes this sort of explanation (as well as history in general) so naive is that it merely relegates the problem to the past, but the problem itself is left intact without getting us any nearer a solution. To "explain" an adult's love by the love he had for his mother is to explain love by love. The father makes the idea of God clear only to those who have not understood that in these two figures the same ontological structure represents itself, *precisely life's essence, since it never ceases to feel itself and thus to experience itself as that whose foundation it never is*. The situation of the birth trauma explains anxiety only for a being originally constituted as affective and susceptible of being affectively determined.

To take the following genealogy of psychoanalysis as a sort of history of the doctrines or diverse philosophical and scientific conceptions that preceded and inevitably led up to it would exhibit the same naiveté. Certainly, when Freud came to Paris, a psychology of the unconscious, notably presented as the unavoidable precondition of the central phenomenon of memory, was already written into every contemporary philosophical manual. The concept of the unconscious, which later would be both Bergson's and Freud's, had been taught in the schools long before the two "discovered" it in their work. But to put forth the evidence of these subtle ideological sequences with all the satisfaction erudition can give would be almost pointless. We would still not have understood the reason behind the crucial assertion of an unconscious constitutive of man's most intimate and profound being—a *psychical* unconscious. That Descartes's contemporaries produced this affirmation as an inevitable objection to the eidetic definition of the psyche as pure phenomenality—that it was affirmed by Leibniz, Schopenhauer, Hartmann, Bergson, and

Freud, or in Rabier's philosophical manual—concerns only history, the cluster of questions that can be posed to history and to which it, as a "history of ideas," can respond.

Even from the simply historical point of view, the repeated formulation of the psychical unconscious in these different circumstances should give us pause. It cannot be simply an occasional discovery or the invention of a particular moment. If the designation "unconscious" refers to what is most profound in us, and thus to being itself, is it not being itself that ceaselessly produces this designation? Does not life itself, in its invincible retreat from the world, its disappearance from the phenomenality of ek-stasis where all thought moves, mislead us, so that we declare everything that doesn't show itself to thought or is incapable of being shown, everything that never comes to us in the ob-stance of an ob-ject or a "facing" to be merely unconscious—the essential deprivation of the power of manifestation?

Genealogy is admittedly not archaeology. The historial deviations by whose effect the unconscious came into our world and continues to do so every day cannot be simply observed or described as the epistemic structures or ideological horizons of modern thought. They proceed ultimately from life's will to remain in itself. Life leaves the field free for the appearance of the world while secretly founding it; thus it speaks itself to thought—which can never grasp it in the gaze of its seeing—as the unconscious. The fantastic structuring of the unconscious by the scientific imagery of an era (1895, for example), the transcendent developments, the speculative reasonings, the infinite interlocking of hypotheses, the more or less picturesque personages engendered by these, their sometimes burlesque interplay—none of this is as absurd as it might appear. Freudian mythology has the seriousness of all mythologies, in that they all arise from the same essential, secret ground that we are, which is life. And that is why we believe in it so effortlessly, because we recognize ourselves in it so easily.

But because, more than any other, more deliberately in any case, Freudian thought has questioned the rights of objectivity and because

scientific categories explode in it under the weight of original phenomenological determinations, we can say that it is also a sort of ontology—since far from being the mere result of analytical work, its discourse on the unconscious depends on and in its own way exposes the fundamental structures of being. That is why this discourse is no mere unwitting repetition of classical philosophy's (the unconsciousness of pure consciousness, of "transcendental consciousness," the reversal of the philosophy of consciousness into nature philosophy, etc.), thus reproducing the great shortcomings of Western thought. It goes much further, to that thought's un-thought, to the site where in the invisibility of our night, life's untiring and invincible coming into itself bursts forth through us.

To those *thoughts* of life, however, and although they all come from it, life remains indifferent. On the other hand, to reduce being to our thought of it, and even to that more essential thought that joins itself with being in their inherence and original affinity, is pure idealism. To understand psychoanalysis in its historical provenance starting with being is in no way to include it in being as one of its moments, one of its "figures," or "epoches." If our primal relation to being is not ek-stasis—and that is finally what psychoanalysis means to say—if it doesn't reside in thought or its different modes, then we can no longer confide ourselves entirely to this thought (whose errance is not so important, anyway), and the destiny of the individual is no longer completely that of the world. Whether life is purely and simply denied (as in contemporary science, which claims to hold everything in its objectivizing gaze) or we attempt to form an adequate concept of life in that radical phenomenology whose edification we are here pursuing or the representation of life is left to the folklore of mythologies, life nonetheless pursues its work in us, never ceasing to present us to ourselves in the pathos of its suffering and intoxication—the eternally living essence of life.

Osaka, 5 November 1983

I

"Videre Videor"

What makes the Cartesian project so fascinating and still today mysterious and attractive is its coincidence with the project of philosophy itself. First and radical philosophy is the search for the beginning—not for a method that leads to the beginning. On the contrary, no method would be possible if it did not possess a sure point of departure, if it did not find its initial site in the beginning itself. In fact, Cartesianism's crucial intuition affirms that "process" (indeed, *everything*) belongs to and is enabled by the very first advent. We think that the beginning arrives as the "new"; thus, as a new form of thinking, Cartesianism marks the beginning of modern philosophy. But the beginning of modern philosophy presupposes many events. It is not the beginning. The beginning of Cartesian philosophy itself (i.e., the order governing its reasons, especially its primary one) also presupposes a good deal. It is not the beginning. The beginning is not the new. Rather it is the ancient, the most ancient. The Cartesian project consciously turns to the ancient for support and for a beginning. Thus, though Schelling denounces Descartes's pretension of summarily rejecting the burden of a tradition whose infinite richness no one person can reconstruct, no matter how faithful his reproach

might be to the text ("I shall be obliged," said Descartes, "to write just as if I were considering a topic that no one had dealt with before me"),¹ Descartes's intention remains clear: to return to the most initial moment of the beginning, the moment when the beginning begins—continuously.

What begins, in a radical sense? Being, certainly, if it is true that nothing would be if being had not already deployed its essence in order to gather into itself, in its previously deployed essence, everything that is. More precisely, what is the initiality of this radical beginning? What is already there before everything, when everything appears, if not appearance itself? Only appearance constitutes the initiality of the beginning, not as fashioning the apparition and first coming into being of the thing: such a beginning is only the beginning of beings. Appearance is initial in the most original sense of the word, appearing first of all to and in itself. Only in this way is appearance identical to and the foundation of being, since it illuminates itself and takes fire, since this luminous trail—not as illumination of something else but of itself alone, as the appearing of appearance—expels nothingness and takes its place. This is the phenomenological actuality of appearance in its capacity to constitute appearance in itself.² This pure appearance is being. It is the beginning: not the first day, but the very first.

Descartes calls appearance "thought." Precisely at the moment when Descartes considers thought in itself (i.e., appearance for itself), when he rejects all things except their appearance—or more precisely, when he rejects things *and* their appearance (with which they are always more or less combined and confused in ordinary consciousness) and considers only pure appearance, abstracting everything that appears in it—only then does Descartes believe it possible to find what he was searching for: the radical beginning; being; *I think, I am*.

Five remarks will allow us to progress through this difficult repetition of the cogito. The first is that the cogito, at the very least, escapes Heidegger's objection in *Sein und Zeit*,³ which claims that the Cartesian beginning is not radical since it presupposes an at least implicit,

ontological pre-comprehension. For if I do not know confusedly what being is, how can I ever say "I am"? But Descartes does not say "I am." He says "therefore I am." Far from appearing suddenly, without presupposition, his affirmation results from the systematic elaboration of the indispensable precondition necessary to the proposition of being. This precondition is appearance, which Descartes calls "thought." This precondition's determination is cogito's content. "We are, *only* in thinking."⁴

One of the constant themes of the *Meditations*, as of the Replies to the flimsy Objections addressed to them, is that the positing of *sum* results from "I think." On the one hand, appearance opens the field in which it comes to self-revelation, so that the field is constituted by appearance and its revelation. On the other hand, being is only what flashes forth as that field's phenomenological actuality. "Therefore" in "I think, therefore I am" signifies a phenomenological definition of being by the actuality of appearance's revelation in and as itself. That is why Descartes can only shrug his shoulders when confronted by the objections of those who like Gassendi declare that he could just as well have deduced his existence from any one of his other actions: "You are far from the truth, since I am not wholly certain of any of my actions, with the sole exception of thought. . . . I may not, for example, make the inference 'I am walking, therefore I exist,' except in so far as the awareness of walking is a thought. The inference is certain only if applied to this awareness" (*Writings* II, 244). To go from thought to being, as does the cogito, is not simply to presuppose being or to leave its concept undetermined. On the contrary, it indicates the direction of being's essence. The idea of something like a phenomenological ontology has its roots in Descartes.

Descartes calls being "substance" or "thing." In "beginning" Cartesianism (not the *Regulae* but the second Meditation, equivalent to the beginning and in this unheard-of and unique moment of Western thought, identical with appearance's inaugural upwelling) the meaning of this substantialism becomes clear. "Thing," in the expression "a thing that thinks," does not indicate something beyond appearance, in the present of its actualization, as if appearance meant

mere appearance, a phenomenon (*Schein, Erscheinung*) that leaves reality behind, revealing it mediately; that is, hiding it. In its self-showing, appearance does not refer to something other, something that does not show itself. On the contrary, "thinking thing" means what shows itself in self-showing since what shows itself is not a thing but self-showing itself. The something of substance, of "thing," is nothing but appearance's apparition and luminescence.

Therefore, to know what a thing is, what being is, Descartes has no need to consider animals, plants, or ideas—in fact, nothing like that survives the doubt. He need only glimpse appearance's fulguration and Parousia. A thing that thinks is nothing but lightning's flash, a self-illuminating light. Its substantiality is phenomenological actuality, the materiality of phenomenality as such. Once again Descartes's exasperated irony turns against Gassendi and perhaps all assertions of natural consciousness: "It is also surprising that you maintain that the idea of a thing cannot be in the mind unless the ideas of an animal, a plant, a stone, and all the universals are there. This is like saying that if I am to recognize myself to be a thinking thing, I must also recognize animals and plants, since I must recognize a *thing* or the nature of a thing" (*Writings* II, 250). By immediately referring the idea of the thing to the thing that thinks and claiming to found the former on the latter, Descartes not only explicitly excludes any interpretation of being based on beings or the being of beings but inaugurates a wholly new discipline, scarcely developed after him, that we will call *material phenomenology*. This phenomenology does not consider appearance in its radical difference from what appears. Instead, its purely phenomenological and ontological content is explicitly and exclusively taken into account. This is what the idea of *res cogitans* originally means, since it is a thing whose essence is to think; that is, whose substantiality and materiality are those of pure phenomenality and nothing else.

It is unimportant that a fatal fall occurs after this recognition of the beginning in its initiality, that thought becomes merely the principal attribute of a substance located beyond thought, that the adequate concept of substance is then reserved for God, whereas thought

itself becomes mere created substance, just as the body is juxtaposed upon it in an edifice constituted with the aid of transcendent constructions (a point we will ignore here)—in fact, none of this interests us, nor does the question whether this drifting of original phenomenological significations is Descartes's or marks a masking by theological and scholastic conceptions that Descartes originally intended to discard.⁵ Suffice it to note that at the dawn of modern philosophy, when for the first time psyche is eidetically defined,⁶ not only does the division of our being into phenomenal and nonphenomenal mark psyche indelibly, but it implies the ruin of the whole problematic. For if the deployment of being's essence in a realm of actuality is not combined with appearance's fulguration or its pure phenomenological matter, how can the cogito be produced? And from appearance's appearing in me, how can I formulate being's proposition in *sum*? And finally, incompatible with appearance and defined by that incompatibility, what would being be if not separated from phenomenality like beings? Once again, being receives its measure of what is: animal, plant, idea, god.

Beginning Cartesianism, however, exhausts itself in establishing an essential difference between what accomplishes the work of appearance and what does not. For example, the difference between soul and body: soul essentially comes from and designates appearance, whereas body's essence is its inability to manifest. "Soul" as actualization and phenomenological actuality of original appearance has nothing to do with what we now call "thought," with thinking that . . . judging that . . . considering that. . . . Descartes vigorously opposes soul, the antithesis of modern philosophy's *meinen*, to beings. Hence the polemic against Bourdin:

He removes the true and most clearly intelligible feature which differentiates corporeal things from incorporeal ones, *vis.* that the latter think, but not the former; and in its place he substitutes a feature which cannot in any way be regarded as essential, namely that incorporeal things reflect on their thinking, but corporeal ones do not. Hence he does everything he can to hinder our understanding of the real distinction between the human mind and the body. (*Writings* II, 381–82)

In the cogito, it is not doubt that leads to *sum*. Doubt is a "thinking that . . .," a *meinen*. I doubt that there is anything certain. The certainty that follows it, likewise, has nothing to do with *sum*; it too is a "considering that . . .," a "thinking that . . .": "I think that I certainly am because to think it is absolutely necessary that I am," and so on. What leads to *sum*, the Cartesian precondition of being, is appearance, which governs doubt as well as "I walk," insofar as the latter is a determination of soul.

Because thought for Descartes initially means original appearance, the difference between soul (identical to thought) and body (originally estranged from it) is ontico-ontological. Because body for Descartes is incompatible with manifestation, all bodily determinations (e.g., the eye) are blind: "It is the soul which sees, and not the eye" (*Writings* I, 172). Therefore, even though they have eyes, animals (not merely moles) cannot see. Originally the Cartesian mechanism does not signify a certain conception of biological life (several texts, à la Goldstein, imagine the human body as an organic unity).⁷ Rather, it radically formulates the truth of being's irreducible incompatibility with beings. The cogito's phenomenological reduction begins this differentiation, the separation of appearance's appearing from what appears. It strikes out what appears, "body," in favor of appearance, "soul"—not merely suspending its sense of being but hurling it into nothingness. And, precisely because appearance defines being, its laying bare in the cogito's reduction is one with the positing of the *sum*.

This last remark aims to clarify the Cartesian beginning by applying the metaphysical categories of essence and existence to it. Granted, this would be improper if the dichotomy "essence-existence" arose simply from presupposing the facticity of beings and consequently the question of what they are, the question of essence, which, as a *mode of the being of beings* (*Seiendheit*), veils the question of being. To the objection that "I distinctly know that I exist, but not that I know what I am," Descartes responds brusquely that the "one thing cannot be demonstrated without the other" (*Writings* II, 248). The inseparability of essence and existence in the beginning is one

with that beginning: when appearance pours forth its essence in an original reign, existence (or "being," in the original ontological sense) is there. The question of the essence of appearance does, however, lead us to the heart of Cartesianism.

The cogito's ultimate formulation is the proposition *videre videor*: I seem to see.⁸ Let us briefly recall the context of this crucial assertion. In both the second Meditation and the *Principles* (I, 9) Descartes has just performed the radical *epochê*; in his language, he has doubted everything: the earth on which he stands and walks, his room and everything he sees—in fact, the whole world, which is perhaps nothing but an illusion and a dream. Nonetheless he *sees* all of this, even if these appearances are false and he is asleep. But the *epochê* concerns Descartes himself insofar as he belongs to this world as a man. It concerns his body, his legs, and his eyes: none of that exists. What, then, is the meaning of seeing, hearing, being warm, for a being who has no eyes, no body, and perhaps does not even exist? "At certe videre videor, audire, calescere" (Yet I certainly *seem* to see, to hear, and to be warmed).⁹ After the *epochê*, doesn't vision remain, pure vision considered in itself, reduced to itself, to its pure self-experiencing, abstracted from every relation to any presumed eyes, supposed body, or putative world? But if pure vision subsists as such, as a "phenomenon," doesn't what is seen also remain, as simple phenomenon: these trees with their colored forms, or at least these appearances of forms and colors, these men with their hats, or at least these appearances of splotches and clothing? Don't they continue to appear, these appearances, just as they appear? Taken in this way, don't they remain as indubitable givens?

To this question, heavy with consequences, beginning Cartesianism responds in the negative. These forms are not as I believe them to be, for I believe that I see real forms, whereas they are perhaps part of the dream universe where nothing is real. More precisely, a vision not of the eyes is capable of seeing something wholly other than supposed forms and colors: it sees that 2 and 3 make 5, that in a triangle the sum of the angles equals 180 degrees, and so on. But Descartes supposes, and thus affirms, that all this may be false. And if such clearly per-

ceived contents are nonetheless false, it is because, can only be because, vision itself is false, because seeing is in itself of such a nature that what it sees is not as it sees it and even is not at all; because, properly speaking, it sees incorrectly and in a certain way does not see, believing that it sees something when there is nothing, believing that it sees nothing when perhaps everything is there.

The well-known path of the Cartesian *epochè* suddenly gapes beneath our feet, and everything disappears. What this *epochè* produced, what it truly accomplished for the first time, was a clear differentiation between what appears and appearance itself, so that provisionally excluding the first, it liberated the second, proposing it as fundamental. But now this very foundation is shaken; appearance itself is now in question (since appearance is a seeing, designated as such by the Cartesian text). Seeing is rejected because what is seen is precisely not as we see it, because the appearance (as mere appearance) that we at least believe is as it appears is not that and perhaps is not at all. The doubt, as is well known, does not conquer all its dimensions until, as metaphysical and hyperbolic, it accomplishes the subversion of even the eternal truths. But such a subversion of essences is possible only if it first calls something else into question: the domain of visibility wherein such essential contents are visible. After the *epochè*, both the domain of visibility and the seeing that it founds lose their power of self-evidence and truth, their power of manifestation.

What is seeing? Since the human eye is barred by reduction and recognized as incapable of producing vision, vision is given its true nature, the pure fact of seeing. In turn, this seeing presupposes a horizon of visibility, a transcendental light that Descartes calls "natural light."¹⁰ Things, especially mathematical essences, are visible because they are bathed in this light. Seeing is looking toward and attaining what holds itself before the gaze so that the object is seen only through the objection of what is thus thrown and posed before. Before being the objection of thing or essence, however, the objection of what is seen, as posed and placed before, is originally that of being-posed-before as such, that of the pure horizon. It is the opening

of openness as the ontological difference on which is founded all ontic presence. Ek-stasis is the condition of possibility of *videre* and of all seeing in general. But the reduction sharply renounces precisely this original ek-stasis. What then remains? What can it claim to hold in its hands?

At certe videre videor (at the very least, it seems to me that I see). Descartes maintains that this vision, however false it may be at the very least, exists. But what is existing? According to beginning Cartesianism, existing (being) means appearance, self-manifestation. *Videor* designates nothing but that. *Videor* designates the primal semblance, the original capacity to appear and give through which vision originally presents and manifests itself, regardless of what veracity is accorded it as vision, regardless of what it sees or believes itself to see, even regardless of seeing itself. At this point a question arises—the unavoidable, inescapable question contained in Cartesianism and perhaps in all possible philosophies as soon as they can shed light upon themselves: is the semblance that resides in *videor* and makes it possible as original appearance and as the self-appearance through which *videre* first appears to itself and presents itself to us (through which it seems to me that I see)—is this first semblance identical to the semblance in which seeing attains its object and truly constitutes itself as seeing? Is the original essence of revelation reducible to the ek-stasis of ontological difference?

In no way! First, what would the duplication of *videre* in the *videre videor* mean if it was merely a duplication, if the essence of *videre*, which we have just seen, and the essence of *videor*, of which we now have a presentiment, were the same? How would redoubling this same essence give it what it originally lacks: the ability to constitute the beginning, to found itself in the self-certainty of its self-revelation? For the radical significance of Descartes's critique must not be forgotten. If seeing has been discredited in its pretension of firmly establishing what it sees, even if clearly and distinctly; if seeing has therefore been discredited in itself since its vision is perhaps false; if seeing is not a principle of legitimation; how can it possibly accomplish the task of self-legitimation? Seeing occurs in ek-stasis as a

grasping that is not only doubtful and troubled but fundamentally erroneous (if such is the will of the malicious demon).¹¹ But if the appearance that regrips this same seeing, giving it to itself before giving itself an object, if this primal appearance is seeing itself, far from setting aside its uncertainty and trouble, it redoubles them. In other words, the principle destroyed by the *epochê* can no longer save itself: having no validity for anything, it cannot accomplish the preliminary work of self-foundation. Thus the primal appearance that traverses *videre* and makes it an "absolute phenomenon" is and must be fundamentally incompatible with the appearance that sees itself in ek-stasis. Since Descartes has just rejected the latter's visibility as doubtful, it is not nor can it ever be a sufficient basis for pure phenomenality and its original truth.

Therefore, when Descartes declares, "Yet I certainly *seem* to see," he does not mean "I think that I see," as if *videre* were the *cogitatum* of which *videor* would be the cogito.¹² Such, however, would be the sense of the proposition if *videor* was compatible with *videre*, if the semblance inhabiting *videor* was reducible to the ek-stasis of *videre*. The ek-stasis of a second seeing, as "seeing that . . .," would give us the being of the first, as its intentional correlate, as what it sees. Such an interpretation, as we have seen, has the effect not only of absolutely ruining the cogito, substituting the uncertainty of seeing for the primal certitude of "thinking," but is also opposed by Descartes's general critique of reflection. For reflection, far from founding the "certitude" of thinking, is supported by and presupposes it. As Ferdinand Alquié justly remarks, "Descartes does not mean that he is uncertain of seeing, but of thinking that he sees. What he affirms is not the reflexive consciousness of seeing, but the immediate impression of seeing"¹³—which the continuation of the text bears out: "It seems to me that I see, that I hear, that I warm myself, and this is properly what in me is called sensing (*sentir*), and this, taken precisely thus, is nothing but thinking."¹⁴

So Descartes unearths the original essence of appearance, expressed in *videor* and interpreted as the ultimate foundation, in "sensing." As sensing, thought deploys itself invincibly with the fulgu-

ration of a manifestation that exhibits itself in what it is, and in "sensing" the *epochê* finds the radical beginning it was seeking. Descartes continuously affirms that we sense our thought, sense that we see, that we hear, that we warm ourselves. And this primal sensing, since it is what it is, is pure self-identical appearance, identical to the being defined by that sensing. I sense that I think, therefore I am. Seeing is thinking that I see ("when I see, or think I see [I am not here distinguishing the two]" *Writings* II, 22), but thinking that I see is sensing that I see. *Videor*, in *videre videor*, designates this sensing inherent to seeing and makes it an actual seeing, a seeing that senses itself seeing. The text of *Principles* (I, 9) is no less explicit: substituting for the walking done with the legs and the seeing done with the eyes the original *videor* of sensing (the sensing that makes seeing a sensing that one sees and walking a sensing that one walks), Descartes categorically declares, "If I take 'seeing' or 'walking' to apply to the actual sense or awareness of seeing or walking, then the conclusion is quite certain, since it relates to the mind, which alone has the sensation or thought that it is seeing or walking" (*Writings* I, 195). In the same way, the letter to Plémpius of 3 October 1637 opposes animal seeing, which expresses only the movement-determining impression of retinal images, to our seeing as we actually experience it: "*dum sentimus nos videre*."¹⁵

What does *sensing* mean? In the proposition *sentimus nos videre* (equivalent to *videre videor*), does *sensing* refer to the same power as that in which seeing develops itself? For after all, seeing is a mode of sensing, just as hearing or touching are, and they belong together. Would Descartes subscribe to the Heideggerian thesis that seeing and hearing are possible only as based in "desevering" *Dasein*? In Cartesianism itself, sensory seeing does not exclude transcendental seeing but is founded on it. If our perception of people passing in the street wearing their hats implies knowing the idea of man—that is, of a thinking substance, which alone makes those moving appearances human—that very idea has an *aspect*. Pure intelligence discovers that idea in ek-stasis, just as it discovers the whole of its specific contents, which are ideas. Intelligence, sensation, imagination— isn't sensing in

general seeing, since sensation means affection by a foreign being and therefore presupposes the ek-stasis of difference wherein being presents itself as other in alterity?

Three Cartesian theses make it impossible to reduce thought's immanent sensing to *videre*. The first, already mentioned, shows that the beginning's certitude does not reside in seeing, which is necessarily false. The second, equally crucial, states that the soul cannot be sensed. This thesis doesn't merely exclude sensing's sensoriality, the obvious fact that the soul cannot be sensed, touched, or seen.¹⁶ The radical problematic introduced by beginning Cartesianism moves entirely in an attitude of reduction, which is precisely what makes it radical: "I had carefully pointed out that I was not here dealing with sight and touch, which occur by means of bodily organs, but was concerned solely with the thought of seeing and touching" (*Writings* II, 249). This thought of seeing and touching contains sensory ek-stasis, so both ek-stasis and sensing itself are excluded from "knowledge of the soul," that is, the original appearance of thought's immediate self-sensing and experiencing in its consubstantial *videor*. The Cartesian concept of "thought" postulates this essential immediacy: "By the word 'thought,' I mean everything that is so interior to us that we are immediately conscious of it (*ut ejus immediate consci sumus*)" (AT IX, 124). "By the word 'thought,' I understand everything that happens in us in such a way that we perceive it immediately by ourselves."¹⁷

Thus the concept of sensing is redoubled in the beginning's problematic, unveiling that beginning. Thought's primal sensing, the *sensitimus nos videre* (i.e., the self-sensing that originally presents thought to itself and makes it what it is, appearance's original self-appearing) is radically opposed to the sensing that rules seeing, hearing, touching, and even understanding (insofar as it is a seeing, *intueri*); it is opposed to transcendental seeing in general, which inhabits all these determinations and has its essence in ek-stasis. Thought's essential self-sensing is not merely different from ek-static sensing; it excludes it, and precisely this exclusion determines the concept of immediacy. But ek-stasis, in its self-development, founds exteriority. Because self-

sensing thought excludes ek-static exteriority, it is essentially a radical interiority. The Cartesian definitions of thought hint at this interiority, which is consubstantial to its essence and identical to its power. As we have seen, thought designates what "is *so interior to us* that we are immediately conscious of it." Hence this fashion of being in us, this mode of interiority as expulsion of all transcendence and the immediacy it determines, constitutes the first essence of consciousness, original-revelation. This helps to clarify Descartes's enigmatic yet crucial proposition, which refers all mediation back to "that type of inner knowledge (*cognitione illa interna*) that always precedes acquired knowledge"¹⁸ and that is really the basis of all. No matter how it is expressed, the fundamental texts refer to this radical, almost unthinkable interiority whenever they attempt to unveil the final possibility of appearance's essence as self-appearing, an essence grasped in the cogito as "thought," or more ultimately, "consciousness."

The third thesis that makes it impossible to reduce *videor* to *videre* states that "appearance" in its original self-revelation knows no ek-stasis. This thesis results from the fifth Reply's explicit refutation of the extraordinary text in which Gassendi, for once rising above his sensualism and empiricist definition of knowledge, suddenly perceives the essence of knowledge, namely, sensing's transcendental structure as the precondition of any individual sense or thought, especially that of sensible seeing. For this seeing is possible only if there is some primal space between it and what is seen. What is seen becomes seen or known, is posed before seeing, in and by that space's exteriority. Thus vision and knowledge are nothing but the opening of the distance in which they know and see, are nothing but ek-stasis. If we then consider a "faculty," that is, any and every power of knowledge, including sensible seeing, that "faculty itself, not being outside itself . . . cannot produce any awareness of itself," cannot see or know itself. This is "why . . . sight does not see itself and the intellect does not understand itself." For Gassendi, to see or know oneself implies a sort of self-affection, a self-appearing or manifestation that according to him, is possible only in the form of and in conformity with the preconditions proper to seeing, namely in and

by the lighting of exteriority, in ek-stasis. "Why do you think that the eye can see itself in a mirror although it cannot see itself in itself? It is because there is a space between the eye and the mirror." What is true of the eye, however, is also true of the spirit, which is merely the ensemble of radical ontological presuppositions formulated here by Gassendi: "Show me a mirror that you yourself can act on in this way, and . . . you will finally manage to perceive yourself—though not by direct but by a reflexive kind of cognition. But since you cannot provide such a mirror, there is no hope of your knowing yourself" (*Writings* II, 203–4).

And this is why, still according to Gassendi, we have no innate ideas, only ones received from outside, because exteriority constitutes the site of every reception and every possible experience. But these presuppositions, which in fact dominate the history of Western thought, are unceremoniously rejected by Descartes: "You prove your case with the example of . . . the eye which does not see itself in itself but in a mirror. It is, however, easy to answer this by saying that it is not the eye which sees the mirror rather than itself, but the mind alone which recognizes the mirror, the eye and itself" (*Writings* II, 253). Therefore, sight in its ecstatic structure (the eye and its mirror) does not constitute phenomenality's first actuality and upwelling. On the contrary, seeing can see what is seen only if it is first possible as seeing, that is, is apperceived in itself. So this apperception is inherent to ek-stasis and precedes instead of being constituted by it. It is appearance's original self-appearing; the One of Difference; radical exteriority's radical interiority; the internal knowledge that precedes acquisition; the *videor* of *videre*; what knows the eye, the mirror, and itself—which Descartes calls "spirit."

Thus Descartes responds to Hobbes's objection that "it is quite certain that the knowledge of the proposition 'I exist' depends on the proposition 'I am thinking' as the author himself has explained to us. But how do we know the proposition 'I am thinking'?" (*Writings* II, 122). And thus the project of the second Meditation suddenly becomes clear when the precise question it addresses is adequately elaborated. For this question concerns neither the soul nor the body

but "knowledge of soul" and "knowledge of body." In the process of reduction that isolates manifestation's pure element, Descartes's "thought," the body that is eliminated by that reduction is nothing but beings. And this is why all ontological determinations, apparently reserved for the soul, are denied it; for example, weight insofar as it implies a will and aim.¹⁹ With "knowledge of the body," on the contrary, we are led back to the ontological dimension of appearance, which is nothing but that "knowledge." Moreover, for Descartes, "knowledge of body" does not primarily mean knowledge of something that would be the body. Instead, he intends a mode of knowledge in itself, a mode of appearance and its structure. The same is true for "knowledge of soul." What, then, is the meaning of the ontological dissociation Descartes initiates between two pure modes of appearance? More fundamentally yet, what is the meaning of the affirmation of one of these modes' primacy over the other, a primacy so essential that the second Meditation is devoted exclusively to recognizing and legitimizing it?

"Knowledge of body" is seeing as such. Whether that of the eyes or what remains after reduction; whether touching, imagination, or inspection of spirit, as vision of what it sees and ek-stasis of what is thrown before it; sensible vision presupposes its own self-appearance. The self-revelation inherent to vision's ek-stasis is different from and prior to it. Only in this way is "knowledge of our mind . . . prior to and more certain than the knowledge of our body" (*Writings* I, 196). For if the two were equal in regard to knowledge and essence of appearance, how could one presuppose the other?

The affirmation of the fundamental ontological incompatibility of "knowledge of soul" and "knowledge of body" and the priority of the first in regard to the second cannot, however, remain a simple assertion or object of a demonstration or implication—as if, for example, we were to say that knowledge of body is originally possible only if there is an immediate and primal knowledge of that knowledge itself and that this preliminary immediate knowledge is precisely "knowledge of soul." The beginning cannot be established by principles, and Cartesianism is a phenomenology. But as we can see,

it must be a material phenomenology, not one that deals merely with the contents of knowledge, with "phenomena"; it cannot simply ask which phenomena present themselves as exemplary or even indubitable. Only the mode of presentation is important. But a mere description of this pure mode's structure would not sufficiently establish its specificity, which can be recognized only if the pure phenomenality that constitutes its mode of presentation is taken into account and brought to appearance. In fact, pure phenomenality brings itself to appearance in conformity with its own power. Material phenomenology has only one design: to read in that accomplished phenomenality the structure of its mode of accomplishment, a structure that exhausts itself in the materiality of actual concrete phenomenality. Here, the word *structure* means nothing else. It means the how of phenomenality's mode of self-phenomenalization identical to the how of its actualization.

Thus the question is whether the Cartesian project was able to continue to the extreme where phenomenology suddenly becomes material. The fundamental opposition of *videre* and *videor*, of seeing and its immanent primordially self-presenting self-sensing, is philosophically founded only if (as the opposition of the two primal modes of phenomenality's self-phenomenalization) it concerns the phenomenological actuality of phenomenality. It is always appearance, in the materiality of its pure appearance, that differs. More important, if this project intends not only to institute a radical differentiation between two modes of presentation, which present everything that can be presented or come to us, but additionally to claim to establish a hierarchy between them so that only what is presented by one of the modes, as its pure ontological content, is presented indubitably (in other words, if only one mode of revelation is absolute), then what must be shown is how, in such a primal upwelling of phenomenality, everything that phenomenizes itself in and belongs to that mode shows itself there as it really is. In the other mode, however (even though it is the accomplishment of an equally pure phenomenality), nothing like that occurs. On the contrary, this mode (the seeing on which people have attempted to base all possible

knowledge, from ancient Greece to the present) finds itself (in its pretension to found such knowledge) struck with nullity. And this nullity is undoubtedly nonprovisional since its impotence is inherent in the very phenomenality of that power. For what is seen is always estranged from the very reality of seeing and from its own reality: it is seen and manifests itself in its self-exteriority; its vision is nothing but this self-exteriority, which therefore *is* only in its self-immanence, as exteriority's radical interiority, as the *videor* inhabiting and enabling seeing.

But this interiority cannot be maintained in the problematic as a simple concept or structure, as the formal anti-essence of ek-stasis. Ultimately, the concept of interiority is legitimized only in a material phenomenology, which means that such a legitimization is inevitably based on an actual apparition—more precisely, on the pure phenomenological substantiality and materiality of that apparition. Only by founding itself on and as this given upwelling apparition; only by recognizing something like a total self-exhibition in the mode of its actual presentation and in the pure phenomenological materiality of that presentation can we affirm that such a manifestation is absolute and indubitable, escaping every reduction. Did Descartes ever, even once, designate the phenomenological substance of apparition as attesting to itself, as presenting itself in itself as it is, as the foundation and essence of all absolute truth and consequently of his doctrine? Did he ever explicitly oppose it to the other mode of manifestation, that of *videre*, which is incapable of containing the preconditions we have just enumerated in the crystal of its pure phenomenality?

The Passions of the Soul answers this last question. Article 26, developing a prescientific problematic according to the treatise's general thesis (that the body acts on the soul by way of nerves or animal spirits) and therefore diametrically opposed to reduction, suddenly returns to it. Once again, sleep and waking are evoked as radically indistinguishable states. Whether asleep or awake, what is seen or sensed in the body, for example, is struck with nullity; seeing and sensing are once again refused their claim to reality, rejected beyond its sphere, whereas self-sensing, original affectivity in general, and all of

its modalities are suddenly marked by the seal of the absolute. They are revealed in the substantiality of their phenomenality, in and by their affectivity, as they are in themselves, and no illusion has any power over them. "Thus often when we sleep, and sometimes even when we are awake, we imagine certain things so vividly that we think we see them before us, or feel them in our body, although they are not there at all. But even if we are asleep and dreaming, we cannot feel sad, or moved by any other passion, unless the soul truly has this passion within it." Thus the truth-determining opposition of *videor* and *videre* is duplicated in a material phenomenology, overdetermined and founded by the phenomenological content of the fundamental modes of appearance, by the substantiality of the pure phenomenality that they circumscribe. Descartes now perceives these two fundamental modes as passion and perception: we may be misled, he says, "regarding the perceptions which refer to certain parts of our body. But we cannot be misled in the same way regarding the passions, in that they are so close and so internal to our soul that it cannot possibly feel them unless they are truly as it feels them to be" (*Writings* I, 338).

Does the phenomenological determination of interiority as affectivity reveal the *eidōs*? Is it coextensive with original appearance in its immediacy if the passions of the soul, in Descartes's specific sense, designate only certain modes of thought? But how are these circumscribed? What limiting principle can determine which of all the modes of the original dimension of experience called "soul" strictly merits the designation "passion"? The well-known answer is that they are determined by the body. "Passion" (joy, sadness), according to Descartes, develops its being in a sphere of radical immanence; it knows nothing of seeing, contains no seeing, sees nothing; it is posited as pure interiority. But the affectivity that affects self-sensing is neither the essence nor the possibility of this sensing; it belongs to something wholly other, to the action of the body on and extrinsic determination of that immanent subjectivity. But in beginning Cartesianism, in the Cartesianism of reduction, the "body" does not

exist. The "explanation" of soul's affectivity by the body's action upon it is not only absurd; it should not and cannot be advanced here. Or was the reduction really only provisional? But what could it mean, except that subjectivity is what it is: the fulguration of first appearance in its own phenomenological content, which is forever what it is in its untiring accomplishment and is not to be modified after the fact by the philosopher's whims. Therefore, since thought's affectivity is alone in the world, it can be explained only by itself and its essence. Moreover, it must be understood as that essence, as its innermost essence, as the self-affectation in which thought reveals itself immediately to itself and senses itself in itself as it is. It is the original sensing, the self-sensing of sensing, the *videor* in which *videre* experiences itself and hence arrives at the affectivity of its reality as experience of vision.

As thought's ultimate possibility, affectivity reigns over and secretly determines all its modes. Even in Descartes, isn't passion's reign strangely extended? Even though, strictly speaking, passions are limited to perceptions in the soul itself (joy, sadness), it appears that "all our perceptions, both those we refer to objects outside us and those we refer to the various states of our body, are indeed passions" (*Writings* I, 337). According to Descartes, this is not merely due to their intrinsic activity; their cause is in the "body." This cause is known in the case of perceptions of objects or our own body, but it is unknown in the case of passions that "we refer to the soul," and it is precisely this unknown cause that *The Passions of the Soul* proposes to make known. But we have already shown that the affectivity immanent to thought, as its immanence to itself, as its first and indisputable content, has nothing to do with its supposed causation by a body *since that body has fallen under the axe of reduction, that is, is not contained in the field defined by the actual phenomenality of this pure content*. Moreover, far from founding the affectivity of this original subjectivity, every explanation by the body or any other cause actually presupposes it as the very thing it was supposed to explain: since Cartesianism in general and *The Passions of the Soul* in particular now operate

outside reduction and in its forgetting, only affectivity in its preliminary phenomenological deployment can respond to the type of question and knowledge that Cartesianism now sets forth.

Descartes finds himself involuntarily but invincibly constrained to recognize that passion in itself, that is, in its affectivity, does not depend on the body. Article 19 accounts for perceptions not caused by the body (as are our passions in general): "those having the soul as their cause." These "perceptions of our volitions" are still called "actions" because "we experience them as proceeding directly from our soul and as seeming to depend on it alone" (*Writings* I, 335). Now, although these volitions exist only as "perceptions" (i.e., as "thoughts") and emanate from our soul and therefore have nothing to do with the body, far from upsetting the concept of passion, they further implicate and are subsumed by it. This occurs when instead of considering them as specific modes of thought, as volitions, Descartes turns to the original apperception that immediately presents them to themselves. "For it is certain that we cannot will anything without thereby perceiving that we are willing it. And although willing something is an action with respect to our soul, *the perception of such willing may be said to be a passion in the soul*" (*Writings* I, 335–36; my emphasis). Thus, affectivity, stronger than the Cartesian prejudice struggling to devalue it by excluding it as such from thought's pure essence, is posited as constituting that essence. Here, affectivity, under the name of "passion," is the primordial *aperceptio*, appearance's insurmountable self-passivity, its immanent self-affection that makes it what it is: appearance's original self-appearing, "thought."

The remaining text is more than strange; in fact, it translates Descartes's retreat before his essential discovery: "But because this perception is really one and the same thing as the volition, and names are always determined by whatever is noble, we do not normally call it a 'passion,' but solely an 'action.'" But "perception" and "volition" are not in the least "one and the same thing." Volition designates a mode of thought wherein thought experiences itself as the source of its activity. In this sense, as self-motivating, it is "action." Volition, or "action," is thus opposed to all other modalities of life, which the soul

experiences quite differently: "It is often not our soul which makes them such as they are, and the soul always receives them from the things that are represented by them" (*Writings* I, 335). These are, precisely, our "passions." Perception, on the other hand, designates something wholly different, namely, the original immanent apperception that makes each of the soul's modes, whatever it may be, a mode. Perception designates thought's universal essence, consisting of and enabling that apperception. Now, article 19 generally calls this apperception "passion." The original concept of passion dominates the opposition of "actions" and "passions" and founds them all. Admittedly, we too can say, as Descartes did, that perception and volition "are one and the same thing" since such a perception ignores ek-stasis and since, as immanent apperception consisting of the self-sensing and self-suffering of the original passion, the will, like every other mode of thought, remains one with itself and the power that presents itself to itself in the immediacy of affectivity.

The fundamental phenomenological dissociation of *videor* and *videre* is the indispensable theoretical preliminary to the classical debate concerning what "thought" means in Descartes's philosophy. As is well known, the second Meditation gives two definitions of the concept of thought—one by essence, the other by the enumeration of modes: (1) "I am, then, in the strict sense only a thing that thinks; that is, I am a mind, or intelligence, or intellect, or reason—words whose meaning I have been ignorant of until now."²⁰ (2) "But what then am I? A thing that thinks. What is that? A thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, is willing, is unwilling, and also imagines and senses."²¹ The first definition should make the second superfluous. Concerning our most essential being, Descartes rejects both the traditional conceptions *and* naive anthropological knowledge, both marked by their cumulative character, their confusion, and the nonelaboration of their problematic. From the start, he therefore aims at the constitution of an eidetic, restricting it to a phenomenological essence and what is more, to the essence of phenomenality itself. This essence is defined as *mens*, *animus*, *intellectus*, and *ratio*. But what do these terms mean?

Starting with the *Regula* I, they are associated with other, equivalent terms: *intellectus*, *bona mens*, *naturale rationis lumen*, *humana Sapientia*, *universalis Sapientia*, *scientia*; and in the *Regula* II, *cognitio certa et evidens*. The content of these terms is clear: their goal is self-evidence, or rather its precondition, the natural light (i.e., transcendental light—the *humana Sapientia* is immediately given as *universalis Sapientia*). This light is transcendental since it is the foundation of all possible knowledge, of all science, of its own self-evidence and certitude. In the actuality of its phenomenality, light constitutes the essence of both *ratio* and *intellectus*. The context of the second Meditation confirms this interpretation. The elucidation of the concept "spirit" (*mens*) reveals it to be the fundamental power of our knowledge, which truly is an *intellectus*, an *inspectio* of the spirit (if we abstract all specific contributions of the senses or the imagination), or again, a *ratio*, if by that we mean the spirit's capacity of perceiving its ideas as pure ideas, whether as the idea of extension or that of thinking substance, that is, the adequate idea of man.

But such considerations pertain only to the end of the *Meditations* or to the *Regulae*. The first Meditation and the beginning of the second—the whole phenomenological process of elucidation that ends in the positing of *sum* in *cogito*—wholly ignores the definition of *mens* as *intellectus*, or rather rejects it totally. Recall that such a process is one of doubt, the doubt that strikes the ensemble of anthropological or scientific knowledge with nullity solely because it shakes their common foundation: the transcendental light, the *Sapientia universalis*, of which the *Regula* I states that it "always remains one and the same, however different the subjects to which it is applied, it being no more altered by them than sunlight is by the variety of the things it shines on" (*Writings* I, 9). Thus this ontological horizon (recognized in its incompatibility with and irreducibility to beings and at the same time as the precondition of its knowledge), this ultimate possibility of understanding and comprehending, of perceiving ideal contents, falls under the attack of reduction and is struck out by it. Whereas natural doubt supports itself on these reasons, the metaphysical doubt sweeps away the lot of them, and the *ratio* trembles in

turn. If thought is to constitute the stable and absolute foundation sought by beginning Cartesianism, its definition as *animus*, *intellectus* *sive ratio* is decidedly impossible.

Moreover, such a definition secretly stems from a problematic other than that of the *cogito*, a problematic that reappears at the end of the second Meditation. Here Descartes no longer examines the *mens* in itself, in the immediacy of its appearance, but as the precondition of knowledge of the body, or rather as its essence: "Bodies are not strictly perceived by the senses or the faculty of imagination but by the intellect alone (*a solo intellectu*)" (*Writings* II, 22). The entire analysis of the piece of wax or the people passing in the street with their hats circumscribes, characterizes, and elucidates precisely this "knowledge of the body" (as having its foundation in the ek-stasis of seeing as pure seeing, "inspection of the spirit," the essence of *videre*): such an analysis, as we know, is precisely not that of the body, of this or that body, of extension, but that of *knowledge* of the body, that is, precisely of the understanding. But this "knowledge of the body" (which also remains problematic in itself and, as such, cannot constitute the beginning) originally and untiringly refers back to "knowledge of the soul,"²² whose more original essence was exhibited in the *cogito*. That the Cartesian *mens* is not reducible to the *intueri* of *intellectus* and *ratio* is shown not only by Descartes's most fundamental theses but also by this text: "I do not doubt that the mind (*mens*) begins to think as soon as it is implanted in the body of the infant, and that it is immediately aware of its thoughts (*simulque sibi suae cogitationis conscia sit*)."²³ Unless we suppose that the most essential being of man consists in mathematical activity and that the child occupies itself with preparing for the College Boards in the womb, we must recognize that the "thought" here in question is not "understanding" in the strict sense but revelation in its most original form, the mute immanence of its first being-to-self, in the affectivity of pure self-sensing.

Therefore, if the first definition of thought by its supposed essence (in fact, that of "knowledge of the body") is inadequate to the beginning and cannot produce it in itself, let us turn to the second.

Despite its enumerative character, if the accounting for the plurality of thought's fundamental modalities obliges us to conceive of a possible unity residing in their common essence (which is identical to that of thought), doesn't this second definition lead us straight to the essence? If this essence is that of understanding, is it possible to solve the problem of attributing a single essence to a thought that has these diverse modes?

Concretely, the question is this: are sensation's living experiences, especially imagination, compatible with and reducible to the intellectual intuition of simple natures? Granted, a solution to the first difficulty exists in Descartes himself. Indeed, if we suppose that the nonintellectual faculties of thought (i.e., sensation and imagination) are not proper modalities of pure thought but mere accidental interventions (resulting precisely from the accidental determination of thought by body, in reason of their union), doesn't this solve our difficulty? In this way we can comprehend "thought" (identified with understanding) as capable of assuming modes that are contingent relative to its own nature.²⁴ Indeed, eidetic analysis demonstrates that understanding is the essence and that sensation and imagination are merely accidents, since according to the sixth Meditation, we can think without either imagining or sensing, whereas the contrary is impossible: "This power of imagining which is in me, differing as it does from the power of understanding, is not a necessary constituent of my own essence, that is, of the essence of my mind. For if I lacked it, I should undoubtedly remain the same individual as I now am" (*Writings* II, 51). And again: "I find in myself . . . faculties of imagination and sensation, without which I can quite well conceive myself . . . complete."²⁵

But the second Meditation's problematic develops entirely in an attitude of reduction. Thus, as we recall, it completely ignores the body and its supposed action on the soul. Therefore, no construction that transcends the phenomena (in this case, the body's determination of those "types of thought," sensation and imagination) can explain the inherence of these modes in a thought reduced to pure understanding. Will it be claimed that we must await the sixth Medi-

tation for the difficulty to be surmounted and for Cartesianism to answer the imprudently raised question? But as has also been said, the reduction is not provisional. This means that the problem is and must be posed and resolved at the level of phenomena, excluding the hypothetical constructions of science and dogmatic philosophy. Therefore, only by taking the modes of sensation and imagination as they are posed and advanced by the power of their own phenomenality can they be exhibited as pertaining to thought, and in turn this "thought" signifies nothing but that very phenomenality. Moreover, such modes are modes of thought solely because they manifest themselves in and by it, in that pure phenomenality inherent in both. This is also why the definition of thought by the enumeration of its modes does not establish any discrimination between them, because, circumscribed by their phenomenality and exhibiting themselves equally in it, they all have the same rights.

Moreover, this second, "modal" definition of thought only appears to oppose the first: if the first (the determination of thought as appearance's pure essence, as "spirit") mentions neither sensation nor imagination, this is precisely because it proceeds from reduction, because the body has fallen away, and with it, sensation and imagination *as psycho-empirical faculties of man*. But reduction bars psycho-empirical sensation only to liberate the pure field of appearance, and in that field, sensation and imagination, now identified with pure appearance and promoted by it to the condition of absolute, irreducible phenomena. Under this heading they enter the second definition, equal in dignity to appearance itself, precisely as modes of its actual accomplishment.

Therefore, only in reduction, in their intrinsic phenomenological content, can we ask about sensation and imagination's possible inherence in thought (as understanding). In the end, only this content can furnish the answer. Now, sensation and imagination, when no longer interpreted naively as psychological powers of man; when their acts are no longer interpreted as ontic processes; when, on the contrary, the transcendental question of their possibility is posed (i.e., the possibility of their phenomenализing something, which then and only

then can they sense and imagine, and the possibility of their becoming phenomenal themselves, they who as sensation and imagination, as modes of thought, are nothing but such a becoming)—sensation and imagination taken thus, precisely as "thought of sensation" and "thought of imagination," are much less opposed to the understanding than it appears. If we leave aside the (truly crucial) problem of their own tonality (which Descartes does only after forgetting reduction, so that "explained" by the "body," i.e., by beings, this problem is totally excluded from the ontological problematic of pure thought)—in other words, if their affectivity remains unquestioned in its specificity, don't sensation and imagination at least present what they sense in the space and light of a seeing, by the mediation, therefore, of the essence that the first definition calls *intellectus sive ratio*? This transcendental seeing, immanent in their exercise as its final possibility, as the possibility of their always surpassing themselves toward a content and attaining it—doesn't this "seeing" constitute that "type of intellection" (which Descartes recognized them to be) and make them precisely "species of thought"?²⁶ In all rigor, we can thus conceive how sensation and imagination, containing the intellection that allows them to sense and imagine their object, appear as modes of thought reduced to that intellection.

Nonetheless, seeing itself has fallen under the attack of reduction. So it cannot found sensation and imagination, nor can it establish them as those modes of thought, collected in the second definition, that escape reduction with absolute certainty, nor could the *intellectus* itself do this if it were not supported in its depths by the power of a more original mode of appearance, irreducible to the *intellectus* and moreover incontestable. We will demonstrate that not the *videre* of seeing but only the more original semblance of *videor* determines both the "certitude" of thought and its inherent modes by examining one of these modes, mentioned not less than five times in the second definition ("*dubitans, affirmans, negans, volens, nolens*")—namely, volition.

All of Cartesianism stresses the separation and even the express opposition of these two "faculties": understanding and volition. The

theory of judgment and in many ways the method itself rest on their separation. Additionally, it must be remembered that in the cogito the recognition of appearance, in its initial fulguration (the recognition of the essence and being of thought), is based on volition itself, of which doubt is merely a mode. For if this doubt is no longer natural doubt, which seeks its reasons in understanding, but hyperbolic doubt, the doubt against nature and against the nature of understanding, against the *ratio*, it is precisely because this is a mode of infinite volition, a volition that in me is equal to God's, one that wills whatever it wants absolutely, unconditionally, and without limit, that can will the true to be false and will seeing, including the form of self-evidence that reposes in it and bathes in its light, to be a non-seeing. Once again, the understanding does not intervene in any way in this process of reduction except to be rejected by it: on the contrary, how could it constitute the beginning essence to which this process returns and it discovers in its irreducibility?

And yet, doesn't even volition have to reveal itself if it is to be something rather than nothing? Doesn't precisely this fact make volition, despite its infinity, a mode of thought? And doesn't it then become an offshoot of the understanding it claims to exclude? This paradox is truly characteristic of Cartesianism, the paradox that makes infinite volition a mere mode of a finite essence. But this paradox is actual and insurmountable only if grasped in its radical, that is, phenomenological signification. Similarly the finitude of understanding is neither an affirmation of doctrine nor a simple concept but refers to and properly designates appearance itself, at least insofar as appearance is identified with and resides in understanding. What is finite is transcendental seeing itself, or rather its foundation, the horizon of visibility opened by ek-stasis in the lighting from which the gaze of seeing advances, a pure place of ecstatic phenomenality. Descartes's whole method (since it engages and places faith in *intueri* and its light, in the light of *Sapientia* and *scientia universalis*, of *bona mens*, of *intellectus*, of the natural light of reason) is nothing but the description of the preconditions upon which the aforementioned understanding clashes and the avatars in which it is lost, since its gaze

moves in an essentially finite horizon. The finitude of that horizon constrains intuition (seeing, *intueri*) to perceive only one thing at a time, so that the concentration on that thing of light, in which it then presents itself in the self-evidence and clarity of true knowledge, implies the retreat to the shadows of everything it is not. Such a seeing, in spite of, or because of, its acuteness and intensity, then appears to be identical, and more than identical, to not seeing, so that the "not seen" is henceforth proposed to knowledge as the object of an interminable quest. The Cartesian method surreptitiously endeavors to exorcise this fundamental finitude of ekstastic manifestation by attempting to understand step-by-step the reign of that light; by passing from one intuition to another and still yet another; by affirming that this passage, far from introducing a discontinuity in the process of knowledge, is itself an intuition. And finally, in the presence of a chain of intuitions, it recommends running back over them so often and so rapidly that the spirit slips from one to the other, and in the end, they all seem to become one, and the deduction returns to intuition.

All in vain! These expedients, far from overcoming it, return to and secretly nourish the same irreducible phenomenological situation, the situation through which each new content of experience offers itself to the light of seeing only if the preceding one sacrifices its own proper presence. And for the sake of a chain of reasons that he would hold together in the spirit, for a single problem whose givens he would like to keep in memory, everything else is tossed into the night. Such a situation (i.e., the phenomenological structure of phenomenality by which seeing nourishes itself) determines the very content of what it sees, even when that content seems to reveal itself to sight as it is in itself. For simple nature is simple only when it presents itself as the correlate of *one* intuition. The unity of this "one" circumscribes and defines its simplicity. We recognize that such a simplicity originates in essence's mode of presentation (and not in its intrinsic content) by the fact that far from being a closed and self-limited object, the Cartesian simple nature has an infinite richness. It is a relationship that refers to other relationships, an essence that contains a multitude of implications, virtualities, and potentialities,

which in turn must be actualized (i.e., intuited) in the process of endless phenomenological elucidation. As carrier of implications, simple nature is never so clear and distinct as not to be surrounded by a fringe of shadow constituted by the horizon of its potentialities, and Descartes was forced to write in *Regula XII*: "We do not have a distinct conception of the number 7 unless in a confused sort of way we include 3 and 4 in it" (*Writings I*, 46). But the infinite interplay of these references and implications (always surpassing the clearly given and moving toward a horizon of obscure potentialities) does not arise from the given or its content (in itself it contains no representative potentiality) but precisely from its mode of presentation. Therefore, it is not essence or beings that are finite: it is the site where they appear. Finitude is an ontological structure of phenomenality whose essence is ek-stasis, and this is because understanding's seeing produces itself in the center opened by ek-stasis, which in turn is also finite.

But here our question is one of volition and its possible inherence in thought (defined as understanding). How, then, is that volition, infinite in itself, capable of revealing itself in its infinity if its revelation is entrusted to an essentially finite power? For its finitude concerns even the phenomenality promoted by and constitutive of that power. In addition, this finitude designates phenomenality as a finite site, so that what appears in that site exhibits nothing but a partial and limited aspect of its being and instead overflows it on all sides and disappears. If volition nevertheless refuses to hand over its essential being in the form of an aspect, or infinite series of aspects offered to seeing, and if its being has no outer face whose recollection and summation would allow its essence to be seized, that is because it is neither possible nor infinite except as power. And power can never be grasped in any given aspect or *imago*, in the outside-itself of some exteriority. Instead, it experiences only itself interiorly and arrives at itself and its own power, to grasp and deploy it, only through the mute experience and passion of itself. Thus, as we have already seen, Descartes expressly characterizes the original *aperceptio* as passion. In this *aperceptio*, volition lives itself immediately as will, arising directly from and depending only on soul. The exclusion of the body, here

quite explicit, excludes every possible bodily explanation of the primordial *aperceptio*'s affectivity, as has been claimed in the case of imagination and sensation.

Now the nature of this passion becomes perfectly clear, this passion that permits volition to reveal itself in one fell swoop just as it is, in its infinity and power, the nature of thought's most original essence: not understanding's *videre*, in the finitude of its ek-stasis, but *videor*'s first semblance, the first appearance as it appears to itself in the self-affection of its radical immanence. Now the crucial opposition between *videor* and *videre* and the division of thought according to these two fundamental modes of phenomenality become significant. Understanding's seeing is precisely what does *not* possess sensation, imagination, volition, and feeling (*sentiment*), missing from the enumeration only because it constitutes its unperceived unity. What does found the inherence of all of these modes in the same essence, coextensive and cointensive with their being, is the original *aperceptio*, that "type of intellection" that each of them contains as originally revealing them to themselves as they are in the totality of their being, also contained in understanding, since *videre* is possible only as a *videre videor*.

That the regression toward first appearance and the beginning was accomplished in the cogito not from any specific mode of thought (from understanding) but by its exclusion, by the obscure act of the infinite passion of a blind volition, summarily and entirely rejecting the intelligible—this should have made us think . . . think that the most initial thought, glimpsed by Descartes at the dawn of modern culture, had precisely nothing to do with the thought that through theories of knowledge and science would guide that culture toward a universe like ours. We should have thought that this inaugural thought, in its retreat from the world and its irreducibility to seeing, in the radical subjectivity of its self-immediacy, deserved another name, a name that indeed Descartes gave it, the name of "soul" or, if you like, "life." But Cartesianism itself could not maintain itself upon the precarious summit of original significations, so to understand our modern world, we must question its decline.

2

The Decline of Phenomenological Absolutes

The crucial distinction between *videor* and *videre* can be firmly grasped only by a material phenomenology, one that refers each of its fundamental concepts to its actual and effective phenomenality, so that these pure manifestations, these crystals of appearance, are recognized in the radical difference of their phenomenological substantiality. When phenomenology or even a phenomenological ontology forgets this original reference, it is pure conceptualism. Its propositions become merely apodictic, reduced to a gratuitous and indefinite game. For what does appearance mean when exhibition's concrete phenomenality is not exhibited in itself? What does it mean for appearance to appear in and as itself if the field thus opened by it for its self-manifestation is not recognized in its specific phenomenality? And what can it mean for appearance to present or withdraw itself, to present itself in withdrawing itself? What does it mean for the truth of being, for pure appearance, to deliver itself as the truth of beings in the veiling of its own truth if this truth is not phenomenological material of an actual mode of pure phenomenality?

In fact, no concept, especially not phenomenality's, goes without reference. As soon as the word *appearance* is uttered, we understand,

at least implicitly, an actual, nonarbitrary mode of pure phenomenality. The first thing that offers itself to us as the referent of every concept that utilizes phenomenality in one way or another is the world's visibility; that is, the transcendental horizon thrown before us by ek-stasis and the preliminary view through which in turn all things, all beings, become visible. It is precisely this phenomenality, produced in exteriority's exteriorization, that founds Descartes's "natural or universal light." And this light in turn serves as the foundation of seeing, of *intueri*. *Videre* obviously refers to this light. In its apparent autonomy, this mode of phenomenality's unfolding appears so original that it has been the basis of every, usually implicit, conception that has guided philosophical thought since its origin in Greece. Only the extraordinary rupture of "reduction" could rout the presuppositions gathered in the Platonic *idea* and the *Regulae's ratio*. Then, for a moment, philosophical consciousness glimpsed the underside of things, the invisible dimension, never separated from itself, never outside itself, never pro-posing itself as a world, having no "exterior," no "interior," no "face," invisible to all: subjectivity in its radical immanence, identical to life.

As it emerged in Western philosophy, the concept of consciousness was mysteriously doubled, designating both the visible and the invisible, thought and life, interlinked and founded upon each other. But even the original semblance, from which seeing itself obtains its preliminary being, arises from material phenomenology's prescriptions. Original semblance is not a concept. It exhibits itself in itself in the actuality of its phenomenological material. Did Descartes really conceive affectivity as material, as the phenomenological substance of self-affection by which seeing affects itself and thus experiences its seeing, as that original semblance in which it seems to me that I see?

Here begins the historical deviation through which modern philosophy loses its grip on life's essence, blocking further progress except as philosophy and history of "thought," in the exact sense that word has in our modern world. On the one hand, Descartes did recognize thought's affectivity, or rather, in an already restrictive sense, its ability to assume a truly affective form in certain of its modes, such

as sensations and sentiments (which are rather poorly distinguished), at least in the passions of the soul. That these last are so named immediately implies that they belong to the soul, to thought. This is more than a simple statement since Descartes is engaged in a largely phenomenological analysis, though pursued with the aid of concepts whose legitimacy we will have occasion to question. Concerning these sentiments, Principles I states that they are both "clear" and "confused" and, in section 68, that we will not go wrong about them if we distinguish "what is clear in this connection from what is obscure." That these sentiments are clear and, then, "clear and distinct" (§66) means that they are phenomenological materials, modes of thought; and because they belong to the cogito, they are as "certain" as its other determinations: the soul can sense them only as they are since their being consists of self-affection. That these sentiments (sensations of heat or joy) are "obscure" or "confused" means the same thing: Descartes is aiming at the phenomenological specificity of these passions' phenomenality, the fact that such a phenomenality is not the transparency of intelligible light but affectivity, phenomenological material, irreducible in its own tonality. Descartes also says that sentiments are confused in another sense, and then alone is it proper to distinguish their clarity from their obscurity. Then the analysis is true only for sensations, which are "clear" for the reason just mentioned (insofar as they are phenomenological material) and "confused," not in themselves, in their affectivity, but in the judgment naturally attached to them, which relates them to external things—above all, to the body itself. In that "judgment," the sensations seem to belong to the things or the body, as if it were they that were warm or in pain: "We generally regard [these sentiments] not as being in the mind (*âme*) alone . . . but as being in the hand or foot or in some other part of our body" (§67). And section 68 adds: "Pain and colour and so on are clearly and distinctly perceived when they are regarded merely as sensations or thoughts. But when they are judged to be real things existing outside our mind, there is no way of understanding what sort of things they are" (*Writings* I, 217).

These magnificent texts not only reaffirm the ontico-ontological

difference, which decisively prohibits attributing appearance's determinations to beings, but precisely because affectivity is explicitly referred to appearance and because it is grasped as incapable of being situated elsewhere, its inherence in the soul signifies nothing but its active intervention in the process of phenomenality's construction. For this is what essence means—essence of soul, essence of thought: the final and most intimate possibility of the power that produces phenomenality and leads it to actuality. But when Descartes is confronted with the blinding intuition that affectivity constitutes appearance's first coming into itself (the original self-affectation wherein appearance appears to itself and wells up in its own phenomenality's appearance), his gaze falters. Affectivity is no longer the essence of thought. Its substance (the phenomenological substantiality of pure phenomenality) no longer comes to it in virtue of what it is, identical to its engendering power, but as an accident, as coming from elsewhere, which, as external constraint, merely has the effect of undermining its revelatory power and its own phenomenality's transparency. And so this transparency, suddenly separated from its primal capacity to exalt appearance and carry it to apparition, is lost along with that capacity. Transparency changes from clear (and clarifying) to "obscure." For Descartes, "obscurity" is not a phenomenological indication referring to the more original site, *within* ek-stasis, from which appearance wells up in its immediation. Instead, it marks a decline, an alteration by a foreign power. Obscurity is no longer thought itself, pure thought, but its "trouble." Once again the principle of reduction, the crucial split between appearance and beings, is forgotten. After beings are suspended, torn from phenomenality's essence and preconditions, they return in force as one of those preconditions. "Feeling," explicitly proposed as a pure phenomenological element, ceases to be one. It no longer belongs to appearance but becomes a (rather mysterious) effect of the beings in that appearance.

If, however, affectivity no longer constructs appearance from inside, making it possible in its first semblance, if it no longer furnishes appearance's immediation with the actuality of its phenomenological material (i.e., its very affectivity), where *does* phenomenality's power

come from? What is the phenomenological substance of that first coming? Henceforth, ek-stasis and its light constitute phenomenality's sole cause and essence: affectivity is merely its modification. Although the immanence prescribed by all Cartesian definitions of thought and idea is maintained as an unavoidable requirement (for how can ek-stasis maintain or even deploy itself if the power that deploys it, namely itself, does not reside within itself, enabling it to be what it is and do what it does, if objection is not contained in its radical interiority to itself, if, in Cartesian language, the idea does not have material reality?), this immanence is no longer anything but a simple prescription. It becomes fragile as soon as its phenomenological basis disappears. The basis is now provided by light, the light of ek-stasis and *ratio*. Light is surreptitiously substituted for appearance's immediation and takes its place, a place that through its invisible retreat from the world, appearance always leaves free. So begins the forgetting and loss of the beginning: because ek-stasis at first holds itself in itself, light, through an effect of occultation that rebounds onto its own origin, covers it up, invincibly positing itself as phenomenality's unique essence and substance. The cogito is dismembered; the first semblance of the *videor* abolishes itself in that of the *videre*; "I think" means "I see." "Thought" is no longer life but its contrary; it has become knowledge.

The end of the second Meditation already makes it quite clear how the clouding of *videor* by *videre* is achieved in Descartes. This portion of the second Meditation is undermined by a profound contradiction. On the one hand, it must be remembered that knowledge of soul is easier to obtain and prior to that of body, so that all the powers enabling it to know the body must first be known in themselves. There is an original semblance immanent to these powers, through which they come into themselves and appear as they are. Under pretext of better grasping knowledge of soul, and precisely because it is immanent to and permits knowledge of body, the latter becomes the real theme and guide of the analysis. Knowledge of soul is determined by what enables it to know body. It is then noted that the vision of extension, or rather its idea (i.e., intellectual vision

rather than sensation or imagination), is required. In any case, the contest to decide which of these three faculties of soul (now interpreted as faculties of knowledge) is a true faculty leaves the victory to vision alone, which must then be grasped in its purity, eliminating the trouble and obscurity contained in sensation and imagination. The second Meditation ends on that paradoxical conclusion: excluding the affectivity of appearance to reduce it to seeing alone, whose essence is circumscribed in turn by excluding affectivity—as if seeing's original self-affection and immediacy had ceased to be a problem, the problem of the cogito itself.

The third Meditation only accentuates this regression. This is the effect of a double circumstance that modifies or reverses the sense of the Cartesian approach. In the first place, there is the crucial substitution of the relation between *cogito* and *cogitatum* for the cogito itself. This relation, or rather the *cogitatum* itself, becomes the theme of the analysis. For Descartes, it is no longer a matter of gaining knowledge but of decisively founding it—as if it weren't already, as if the cogito hadn't already done so. The *videor* as *videré*'s immediation, originally revealing it to itself as an irreducible and indubitable seeing, as its material reality, is forgotten. This in turn bends the problematic to the wholly different project of mediately legitimizing sight through divine veracity, which is to be found in the idea of God, interpreted as *cogitatum*. To do so, one must first discover the latter, take an inventory of the *cogitata*, assuring oneself of them as *cogitata* and thus rescuing them from the reduction by presupposing the infallibility of the very seeing that was supposed to be founded. For the truth of this whole movement, insofar as it avoids contradiction, is this: the *cogitatum* now single-handedly escapes the reduction. This means that what is thought, limiting ourselves to it “as it is thought” (as it is given), is incontestable being. Therefore, the ideas (e.g., the idea of God) as *cogitata*, considered in their objective reality (as long as we don't first question whether any reality corresponds to them, whether the reality of an actual God corresponds to his idea), no longer fall under the ax of doubt. Being thought, however, being a *cogitatum qua cogitatum*, means being seen. The validity of any objective con-

tent (e.g., the objective reality of the idea of God) is based on its being seen, on being-seen as such. And being-seen, the fact of being seen, considered as a pure property, as a phenomenological precondition independent of its content, of what is seen, is seeing itself, seeing launched into the space of lighting opened by ek-stasis. But the cogito, if we disallow its essential immediation's original semblance, is just such a seeing. The cogito's appearance is then identical to the *cogitatum*'s, the appearance in which the *cogitatum* is *qua cogitatum*. A single appearance traverses both *cogito* and *cogitatum*, and the cogito becomes a mere name for the *cogitatum*'s appearance, which is what makes the *cogitatum* a *cogitatum*. And if it takes so long to recognize this, it is because only the *cogitatum*'s *cogitatum* is noted and not its precondition of being. But once the *cogitatum* is thought as such, in its appearance, once that appearance is grasped in itself, as pure being-seen, it is reabsorbed into and becomes identical to seeing.

In Cartesian terms, it might be said that the distinction between the idea's formal and objective reality, which runs throughout the third Meditation apparently directing its analysis, is lost.¹ Obviously, if we take the idea's objective reality to be its specific representative content (of the soul or God), we can easily distinguish it from formal reality; that is, from belonging to thought. But if belonging to thought means being seen or represented and objective reality designates the content's objective precondition, being-seen and represented, then the formal reality of the idea or thought, reduced to representation and seeing, is nothing but objective reality, understood as the precondition of objectivity. And as precondition of representation, of objectivity, the Cartesian cogito is already a Kantian cogito. In this way, an absolutely general presupposition of Western philosophy comes to light: deprived of its radical interiority, reduced to a seeing, a precondition of objectivity and representation, taken instead as constitutive of and identical with that structure, the subject's subjectivity is nothing but the object's objectivity.

The operation performed by the third Meditation, with its systematic consideration of the *cogitata*, far from being a simple the-

matic displacement conducting the regard of the cogito to its *cogitatum*, becomes the reduction of the first to mere precondition of the second, the reduction of the original semblance of *videor* to the ek-stasis of *videre*. But such a catastrophic reduction, in which subjectivity's original being is simply abolished, doesn't just happen surreptitiously without Descartes or his readers somehow knowing about it. It is revindicated in the famous thesis, which determines the method, according to which the cogito, once established, is proposed not only as a truth, the first of all truths, but also as the criterion of all possible truths. "I am certain that I am a thinking thing. Do I not therefore also know what is required for my being certain about anything? In this first item of knowledge there is simply a clear and distinct perception of what I am asserting. . . . So now I seem to be able to lay it down as a general rule that whatever I perceive very clearly and distinctly is true" (*Writings* II, 24). But if someone asks what clear and distinct perception is (couldn't it be the perception of a sentiment and designate its self-revelation and the phenomenological material of that immediation?), we will be forced to recognize that on the contrary, it is now a perception *of* what I know, a "seeing," the seeing in which I see that the malicious demon "will never bring it about that I am nothing, so long as I continue to think I am something; or make it true at some future time that I have never existed, since it is now true that I exist; or bring it about that two and three added together are more or less than five, or anything of this kind *in which I see a manifest contradiction*" (*Writings* II, 25; my emphasis). This reduction of the cogito to seeing, once it becomes the criterion of truth (a truth then posited exclusively as seeing and its accomplishment in clear and distinct seeing), is reiterated in the remaining text: "None of what the natural light makes me see as true can be doubted, just as earlier it made me see that, from the fact that I was doubting, I could conclude that I was."² A clear and distinct seeing is self-evident. Self-evidence therefore constitutes the criterion of every possible truth, and the fact that its truth power must still be confirmed and affirmed by divine veracity merely shows that this criterion is the

only possible criterion and that it is precisely this criterion that must be definitively established.

A unique criterion of truth, as self-evidence, the cogito is also one of the truths that can be founded on it, the first. It has become a self-evidence: "I see that, from the fact that I am doubting, I can conclude that I am." A self-evidence, a truth—here, that really means the content of a self-evidence, an ontic content. As a truth, the first of all, that allows me to posit my existence by perceiving its inherence in my thought, the cogito no longer constitutes the transcendental condition of possibility of all truth. Instead, it is submitted to and presupposes this precondition under the same rubric as all other truths, now being merely one among the rest: the first truth, that from which the others can be deduced, the first intuition in the chain of deduction, the first reason in the order of reasons. The Cartesianism of the *Regulae* submerges that of the *Meditations* and takes it up again in itself. On what condition? On condition that the precondition of all truth is proposed as the first proposition of science. It is proposed in this way only insofar as its precondition subsists and continues to deploy its essence. In the natural light, I see, from the fact that I doubt, that it follows that I exist, and so on.

Let us therefore radically distinguish between scientific knowledge, which thematizes both individual truths and the first of these truths (in this event, the cogito) as the beginning of philosophy and, on the other hand, absolute knowledge, the appearance that makes scientific knowledge in general and philosophic knowledge in particular possible. Even though it has been thematized in philosophy's scientific knowledge, appearance nonetheless remains the foundation of such knowledge. In short, *cogito* here means two things: first, a certain intuition, and second, its precondition. But when appearance is thought of as scientific knowledge's precondition and indeed that of all possible knowledge, as the precondition of intuition and self-evidence, it is no longer anything but the light of ek-stasis in which seeing is actualized, the seeing of intuition, of self-evidence, of all possible knowledge in general. In the circular determination in

which appearance appears as the precondition of that privileged intuition, the cogito, and the cogito as the thematization of its own precondition, in which seeing constitutes one after the other the form and the content of such a knowledge, nothing appears but seeing itself and its own precondition, the light of appearance wherein its essential immediation, the essence of life, is occulted: in the beginning of philosophy, because it is a mode of knowledge, the beginning is lost.

But because the immediation of appearance is also the immediation and ultimate presupposition of knowledge, it is not so easily forgotten. Two traits characterize Cartesianism. Insofar as it accomplishes the thematic displacement from *cogito* to *cogitatum* and the original immanence of the first is abolished in the ek-stasis of the second, a deterioration occurs that carries away all the concepts of Cartesian phenomenology. Each of them loses its primary significance, its reference to *videor*, in favor of a properly cognitive significance to which the objection of the objected furnishes both its precondition and its content. But contemporary with this deterioration of all the fundamental concepts of phenomenality, the original immediation is maintained as their unperceived and ever-present foundation, and the Cartesian text, in its brightest insights, returns to it. In this way, an amphibole arises, which because it affects each of the key terms of the Cartesian discourse (thought, idea, apperception, perception, natural light, self-evidence, clarity, distinction, confusion, obscurity), makes this discourse wholly unreadable—at least as long as the radical dissociation of *videor* and *videre* and their pure phenomenological content is not retained to furnish the problematic with its necessary reference points.

Recall that the Cartesian definition of thought aims at immediation—witness the designation of sensations, sentiments, and passions by the term “thoughts.”³ Originally the Cartesian “idea” had this same sense, and to avoid an irreversible mistake, it must be understood as fundamentally different from anything we customarily call “idea” (i.e., a representation; the representation of a tree, a triangle, God). The Cartesian idea radically excludes representation (seeing,

intueri). It is anything but an idea of understanding, anything but the aspect of what reveals itself in ek-static light, anything but the intelligible (“the idea or sensation of pain,” says the *Principles*).⁴ The idea’s absolute singularity, identical to thought’s immediation and finally to its affectivity, as idea of spirit—its differentiation as such from all other ideas, from the ideas of (sensible or intelligible) things—is decisively affirmed by Descartes: “First of all, I did not doubt that I ‘had a clear idea of my mind,’ since I had a *close inner awareness of it*. Nor did I doubt that ‘*this idea was quite different from the ideas of other things*.’”⁵

The singularity of the idea in its original form is so important that Descartes takes the trouble to give it a technical definition at least twice: “*Idea*. I understand this term to mean the form of any given thought, immediate perception of which makes me aware of the thought.”⁶ The idea designates thought’s immediate revelation to itself because it rejects each thought in itself, opens and unveils it to itself—thus being its self-revelation, the revelation of thought itself, and not of something else, of an alterity or an undetermined objectivity. Only the idea, taken in this absolutely original way, can make us understand what its “formal reality” is—precisely not something formal, the simple form of a content situated outside it, but in the absence of all exteriority, what is one with that radically immanent content, identical to that thought. Because thought, in itself, reveals only thought, the examples used by Descartes to circumscribe the idea as thought’s original essence are limited to its immanent modes: “I am taking the word ‘idea’ to refer to whatever is immediately perceived by the mind. For example, when I want something, or am afraid of something, I simultaneously perceive that I want, or am afraid; and this is why I count volition and fear among my ideas.”⁷ In fact, all of thought’s immanent modes (sensations, “pleasure” and “pain,” sentiments) should be considered “as being in the mind alone.”⁸

In turn, the idea’s ultimate formal reality clarifies its “innateness.” Innateness doesn’t simply mean that the idea is independent of and prior to any experience. It aims at the idea’s very nature, as defined by a phenomenality exclusive of ek-stasis. It designates affectivity as

constitutive of appearance's original dimension in its immediation, so that every appearing thing appears only in and through that form of affectivity, so that beings in themselves are never affective. The insertion in them of an affective character is nonsense. At most, they can take on such a character in their appearance and in it alone, in their idea's formal reality. Descartes demonstrated this, at least for sensate experience, showing how the idea of sensations (i.e., their affective nature) is innate, arising from their phenomenality's essence, not from the beings that supposedly produce those sensations. Speaking of them, of the idea of pain, color, or sound, the letter to Mersenne (22 July 1641) declares: "For the sense organs do not bring us anything like the idea that arises in us on their occasion, and thus this idea must have been in us beforehand" (AT III, 418).

Nevertheless, Descartes also understands "idea" in its objective reality, in its representative content. But not all ideas have representative content. The original concept of the idea makes this clear, as can be seen in the "ideas" of sensation, volition, passion, and so on. That ideas exist as such, deprived and independent of all representative content, independent of seeing and its ek-stasis, shows that phenomenality's original dimension is constituted neither by representation nor its ek-stasis. Insofar as Cartesianism made this essential discovery, it can be seen as a philosophy of radical subjectivity and life. Certain thoughts, however, do present a representative content, and, curiously, Descartes then reserves the name *idea* for them: "Some of my thoughts are as it were the images of things, and it is only in these cases that the term 'idea' is strictly appropriate."⁹ But it must be noted that representations founded in ek-stasis (and consequently ek-stasis itself) appear as characteristic of certain particular ideas only to be devalued immediately. This is the crucial affirmation, so badly misunderstood by philosophic posterity, that the idea's representative content (i.e., its objective reality) can never be identified with or present reality in itself but only as an image: "The ideas in me are like [pictures or] images" (*Writings* II, 29). Thus the definitive and insurmountable ontological lacuna of being-seen arises purely from its being-seen, from representation and ek-stasis. The "progress" first

realized by Kant, which consists of identifying the preconditions of the object's representation with the preconditions of the object itself, and then by Husserl, with the affirmation that the being touched by the intentional gaze is being "in itself" and "as it is"—this progress is perhaps illusory since the being presented in representation (i.e., in its own self-exteriority) can no longer constitute being "as it is in itself" (i.e., in its reality).

In any case, for Descartes, even when the act of seeing has been founded in *videor's* immediation as certain and ensured, it remains laced with ontological impotence, which prevents it from attaining anything but the double, the image of being: "the mode of being by which a thing exists objectively [or representatively] in the intellect by way of an idea, imperfect though it may be" (*Writings* II, 29). For example, the idea of the sun is not the real sun "as it is in the sky." The idea merely presents the sun "objectively," as it is "in understanding." It does not present reality but its unreal double, a simple copy. Descartes, following Scholastic usage, calls the reality of the sun in itself its formal reality; its representation in understanding is its objective reality. Formal reality (i.e., reality, period) categorically escapes objective reality.

Representation constitutes and defines the ontological dimension of unreality. The strange and often contested thesis of this Cartesianism of the cogito, in which man is enclosed in representations and forever cut off from things, little by little unveils its boundless significance. There are two aspects of this significance. First, it reactualizes the ontico-ontological difference, affirming the inability of beings to realize the work of revelation, the necessity of their submitting to revelation as an outside agency. Beings are presented only in representation, as objection's ob-ject, and are reabsorbed in it. What they are "in themselves," outside the luminous space constructed by representation, forever escapes us, and only divine veracity can assure us that in themselves (in their formal reality) they really are as they appear "objectively in the understanding," that is, as they reveal themselves in representation, as objects.

But for Descartes formal reality is not only that of the thing

whose objective reality exists in understanding as its idea. As we have seen, it is also the idea's formal or material reality. Reality is not the idea's objective reality. It cannot pro-pose itself in the objection of ek-stasis. In fact, ek-stasis opens the milieu of unreality, whereas what escapes it is precisely reality, the formal and substantial reality of thought; that is, appearance in the immediation of its self-appearing. This is precisely the definition or precondition of life. And it is this life that beginning Cartesianism, despite all the later misunderstandings, despite its own decline, holds in view. Once again we can see why divine veracity intervenes twice in constituted Cartesianism: once to guarantee the view of what is seen and again to legitimate the belief that in the order of realities created by God, what is seen really corresponds to the formal reality of a thing in itself. Similarly, the concept of finitude in the purely ontological sense is redoubled, designating not only the finitude of ek-stasis but more radically the fundamental unreality of that ecstatic dimensionality and everything phenomenized in it.

As unreal and finite as the idea's objective reality is, it is nonetheless the third Meditation's major theme. Henceforth, representation's modes guide its reflection and define its teleology. The idea becomes a title for a metaphysics of knowledge. But with the idea in its objective reality, the phenomenality of seeing is, by the same token, installed in the center of if not all possible revelation at least the only one where knowledge and science can progress, discovering their "objects" and hence their own condition of possibility in it. Once the idea is considered in its objective reality, as a proposition of knowledge and science, of philosophy, as its beginning, the cogito itself, as is well known, comes to designate nothing but a simple nature (that of thought) insofar as it implies another (that of existence), and this implication also constitutes a simple nature. But doesn't such a proposition need to be thought? Doesn't the cogito's objective reality presuppose its formal reality as precondition? But what is this formal reality if not the light in which seeing and what it sees are possible, that light in which "thought," "existence," and "the bond that unites them" are immersed? Once it is understood in terms of its objective

reality, the idea's formal reality is lost, confounded with a precondition of objectivity.

Thus begins the regression of phenomenality's fundamental concepts that delivers them over to amphibole if not to the total concealment of their primordial meaning. In what concerns the idea's formal reality, this primordial meaning was exclusively based on its immediation, its self-revelation as thought's immanent mode, exactly like pain or volition; in other words, on the exclusion of all objective reality along with seeing and what it sees. But since this formal reality is the precondition of seeing in its own immediation, it is also the precondition of ek-static seeing and everything it sees; in other words, all objective reality. The reference of objective reality to its formal reality as the reality of the immediation constituted and defined by it is effaced in favor of its reference to the form of seeing alone. The idea's formal reality, "the form of perception," as Descartes continues to say, now tends to designate nothing but that form of seeing and seeing itself—and amphibole gives way to concealment.

The destiny of Western thought, especially Cartesianism, is forged in this concealment. In his third set of Replies, Descartes repeats the essential definition of the idea's formal reality: "By an 'idea' I mean whatever is the form of a given perception. Now everyone surely perceives that there are things he understands. Hence everyone has the form or idea of understanding." But the discussion's context is misleading. Having affirmed that God is "an infinitely intelligent substance," Descartes must respond to Hobbes, who asks, What "is the idea which enables M. Descartes to understand the operation of God's understanding?" (*Writings* II, 132, 131). Descartes appeals to the idea's original structure, the self-revelation constituting its formal reality. The "idea" in question, however, is that of intellection, of the ability "to conceive of something," of the *intueri* and its correlate, so it is all too easy to imagine that the ultimate foundation invoked by Descartes at this point is that of intellection in its specificity, especially since the problematic's theme is constituted by the objective reality of the idea of God, a reality that is to be exhibited in the whole of its components, which are themselves objective.

But in fact every problematic, every science, and philosophy itself obey a similar thematic: they objectively aim for reality and easily take the preconditions of its knowledge for those of reality. In regard to the beginning, this confusion is nothing but that of *videre* and *videor* and the reabsorption of the second in the first. Henceforth, in philosophic discourse, especially Cartesian discourse, the concepts of phenomenality float in total phenomenological indetermination. Appearance once again becomes a formal concept; its metaphors no longer account for the irreducible specificity of its concrete phenomenological actualization. Or rather, since appearance's concept cannot remain merely formal, its content is now furnished by knowledge's ek-static seeing.

Sections 29–66 of the *Principles* offer a remarkable example of the continual deterioration of phenomenality's concepts from immanent to ecstatic. From the beginning of these sections, ek-stasis presides over appearance's determination and essence. God—no longer the objective reality of an idea but its precondition, truth's transcendental precondition, thus identical to appearance and its foundation and “very true”—is “the source of all light” (§29). This light is obviously ek-static since it is the light of knowledge; since what it clarifies takes on the form of the object; since its modes of clarification, insofar as it concentrates on that object and holds it firmly in its seeing, are those of clarity and distinction; since what is thus seen and apperceived is by that very fact “true,” manifest in and by that light. “It follows from this that the *light of nature or faculty of knowledge* which God gave us can never encompass any object which is not true in so far as it is indeed encompassed by this faculty, that is, in so far as it is *clearly and distinctly perceived*” (§30).

On the other hand, when thought's immanent modes, the “ideas” that have no objective reality (sensation, sentiment, volition, liberty), are emphasized (§§39, 41), the problematic attains the only modes of appearance that escape both reduction and ek-stasis: neither in ek-stasis nor in light can they show themselves and accomplish the work of self-revelation. Interiority designates their essence. Necessity overcomes the amphibole, and the old vocabulary itself returns: “The

freedom of our will is knowable without proof, solely by the experience we have of it. . . . We apperceive in ourselves a freedom so great that we cannot prevent ourselves from believing” (§39).¹⁰ “And it would be absurd . . . to doubt something . . . of which we have an intimate grasp and which we experience within ourselves” (§41).

But in order to circumscribe this original phenomenality, which excludes ek-stasis and overcomes the reduction, Descartes employs the idiom of ek-stasis, subsuming two irreducible orders under a single terminology. Not only does *apperception* signify both the view of “an object” in “the natural light” and, amphibologically, the inner self-affection and material reality of thought's immanent modes, which in themselves are foreign to all objective reality, but revelation's final accomplishment, manifested in these two fundamentally different modes, is designated in both cases by the same concepts of “clarity” and “distinction.” Thus clarity and distinction do not refer solely to seeing or its concentration on an object privileged by the light it controls; they also claim to define immanent revelation, irreducible to that light. “For example, when someone feels an intense pain, the perception he has of it is indeed very clear” (§46). Therefore, as long as one holds to this pure experience of pain, to its “idea” or “sentiment,” and doesn't mix it with the false judgment that habitually refers it to a wounded body part, it is still possible to say that “it is the sensation alone which they perceive clearly” (§49). Thus “there remains [only] sensations, emotions and appetites . . . [which] may be clearly perceived” (§66).

Originally, however, according to the famous text of section 45, which aims at the rigorous definition and mutual differentiation of clarity and distinction, they are both modes of knowledge. They not only presuppose seeing and its ek-stasis, but they qualify its modes of self-accomplishment (its attention) and, correlatively, the modes in which its object is always proposed:

A perception . . . needs to be not merely clear but also distinct. I call a perception “clear” when it is present and accessible to the attentive mind—just as we say that we see something clearly when it is present to the eye's gaze and stimulates it with a sufficient degree of strength and

accessibility. I call a perception "distinct" if, as well as being clear, it is so sharply separated from all other perceptions that it contains in itself only what is clear [to anyone who considers it correctly].¹¹

How, then, could clarity as a mode of light name what in itself totally ignores light, the nonecstatic affection in which life produces itself? It cannot, and the remainder of the above-mentioned text of section 46, which speaks of the clear knowledge one has of pain once the judgment that would locate that pain in the body is eliminated, reads as follows: "The only thing he apperceives clearly is his *confused* thought or sentiment."¹² To have clear knowledge of a confused reality is a possibility that everyone understands, but only on condition of misunderstanding Descartes's proposition. For Descartes doesn't mean that one can clearly see that a certain reality is confused in the sense that the potential relations implied in it are not yet clearly apperceived in themselves—as, for example, when I clearly see that the number 7 confusedly contains the numbers 3 and 4. Clarity and confusion do not intend two different things—(clear) knowledge and its (confused) content—but rather a single thing and indeed a single property of that unique thing: clarity designates the appearance of the sentiment; confusion or obscurity, its phenomenological specificity and phenomenality's material as constituted by affectivity. The clarity of the sentiment, of thought in general considered in its material reality, a clarity identical to its confusion, therefore has nothing to do with the clarity of knowledge and self-evidence, the clarity of the idea's objective reality, a clarity now opposed to its confusion but tied to it by an essential law.

Thus the radical elucidation of phenomenality's fundamental concepts, implied and confused by Cartesianism, may be posited as follows:

1. As *identical* with confusion and obscurity, clarity indicates a single essence, the immediation of "appearance": clear since it accomplishes the work of phenomenality; obscure since that accomplishment's phenomenological material is affectivity. Since clarity and obscurity are essentially identical, there is no question of changing

one into the other. They are always the Same, the original dimension of life's phenomenality in which life experiences itself in the invisible, so that nothing that grows in it ever leaves it, just as nothing that remains outside it ever gets into it—whatever is alive is always alive.

2. As *opposed* to confusion and obscurity, clarity belongs to ek-stasis and indicates a single essence: clear since it opens the site of light's concentration; obscure since the site of light is surrounded by shadow; that is, the nonthematizable horizon of all ecstatic exposition. Beings are clear or obscure only as objects. In themselves, beings are never clear or obscure. Only in and through their exposition do beings obtain those characteristics. Thus clarity and confusion are pure phenomenological determinations, consubstantial with and willed by the phenomenality of ek-stasis. Such (opposed) determinations are never separate. One continually becomes the other as long as they contain the becoming of beings. The law of the world's phenomenality, as pure world, is constructed so that every ontic determination comes to presence in clarity only when another gives up its place, so each of them runs through the continuous series from clarity to confusion and obscurity. The possibility of running through that series is a pure possibility prescribed by essence. Every clear determination can change into a confused or obscure one and vice versa.

The obscurity that belongs to ek-stasis as its horizon and in which beings disappear as soon as they quit the place of its presence is a limit-point of the world's phenomenality and its declining mode, and it has nothing to do with the intrinsic obscurity of what ignores ek-stasis. And while the first changes easily into its opposite, into the clarity of self-evidence (this is precisely the teleology of Cartesian method and every science and knowledge in general), the second, the obscurity of the sentiment of life, categorically rejects such a possibility.

Now that *videre* has established its primacy over *videor* in the realm of thought and pushed it into oblivion (as if it had forgotten its immediation, which is never before the gaze, never seen, which it necessarily deploys), now that the concept of consciousness, which

will guide Western philosophy, signifies exclusively “seeing” and its specific determinations, the unconscious is defined in relation to them as the limit mode of the world’s phenomenality, a mode in which the whole of what had been conscious is lost but in which the parts of this whole, one after the other, can resurface. Consciousness reduced to seeing inevitably tends toward this mode, and the teleology of knowledge and science is fixed. But life, in its eternal retreat and inner self-arriving, nevertheless continues unabated. It is the obscure, amphibologically designated as the *unconscious*, so that what is now in question cannot pose itself in obstance, and every attempt at making it conscious is pure nonsense.

But that’s not all. By defining our most essential being as “appearance” and the “soul” as “thought,” Cartesianism raises many problems. For if psyche’s material is phenomenality, if according to the categorical declaration of the first set of Replies “there can be nothing within me of which I am not in some way aware” (*nihil in me cuius nullo modo sim conscius esse posse*),¹³ where can the innate ideas that together constitute my spirit and the multiple potentialities that define it be located? The more radical the eidetic determination of the soul as consciousness, the more strikingly its refutation forces itself into the open, affirming that on the contrary, only a part of our being, and naturally the most superficial part, offers itself to the light. All of our ideas, however, not just “innate” ones, disappear from conscious presence. And what are we to say of their temporality? What happens to memories when we stop thinking of them? This is the classic question invoked by Freud in his “Justification for the Concept of the Unconscious”:

We can . . . argue, in support of there being an unconscious psychical state, that at any given moment consciousness includes only a small content, so that the greater part of what we call conscious knowledge must in any case be for very considerable periods of time in a state of latency, that is to say, of being psychically unconscious. When all our latent memories are taken into consideration it becomes totally incomprehensible how the existence of the unconscious can be denied.¹⁴

If it is a matter of the place of light’s finitude, which permits only “a small content” of beings to present itself in consciousness while the

greatest part of being that is capable of being conscious, “the greater part of what we call conscious knowledge,” remains “in a state of latency,” the term *consciousness* designates the phenomenality of ek-stasis and seeing’s determination in it as a seeing whose actualization in the mode of clarity implies the obscurity of its horizon. At stake are the idea’s objective reality and its transcendental precondition. But if “soul” (psyche, as something other than seeing’s empty form) designates its material reality, life’s reality (in its self-affection’s radical immanence where there is neither objection nor object, neither finitude nor horizon, neither knowledge nor known), then the problematic put forward by Freud as justification for the unconscious does not concern it. If it intends to explain life (namely soul or psyche), a philosophy of the unconscious is nonsense. The unconscious is what hasn’t yet entered ek-static light, what can do so and then withdraw, but these are merely historical determinations from which life is categorically removed. There is no irreconcilable opposition between conscious and unconscious. The only true opposition is between them and life.

Thus Descartes was quite ironic about the claim of reducing the soul’s specific phenomenality (consubstantial with and defining soul’s essence) to its currently perceived contents juxtaposed in the light of ek-stasis. He replied to Revius, who objected that suckling infants had no current notion of God: “I have never written or even thought that such ideas are *actual*, or that they are some sort of ‘forms’ which are distinct from our faculty of thinking.”¹⁵ What is in question is not the fact that consciousness, in the clarity of self-evidence, can contain only one representative content at a time while the others remain virtual but the dimension of phenomenality wherein such a situation is necessarily produced. The soul’s ability to contain the whole of its being in its own appearance implies that relinquishing their objective reality in which the ideas can expose themselves only one at a time, we must consider the power that produces them all. “When we say that an idea is innate in us [or that it is naturally imprinted in our souls], we do not mean that it is always there before us. This would mean that no idea was innate. We simply mean that we have within ourselves the faculty of summoning up the idea.”¹⁶

But the finitude that limits representative contents to successive actualization is removed by the displacement of the idea's objective reality to the power that produces it only if it is first and foremost the displacement of their objective reality to their formal reality. Only because the soul is entirely present to itself in the latter, in self-affection's radical immanence, can the power that produces ideas be entirely present to itself. Thus, when we stop thinking of them, ideas or memories do not reside in an unconscious crudely imagined by Freud, Bergson, and so many others. They exist only as potential; that is, capable of being produced by a power that can produce them. Their phenomenological status is that of this power, the invisible self-immanence wherein each power, each force, and the superabundant power of life are formed, grow, and originally come into themselves.

The determinations borrowed from Scholasticism, with whose help Descartes tried to think soul's essence (or, if you will, the being of things), escape confusion only when grasped through phenomenality's fundamental structures as recognized in the cogito. The terms *actuality*, *virtuality*, *power*, and *faculty* always have two meanings, and philosophy begins with their dissociation. For a potential or virtual representation to become actual, for it to "actualize itself," ecstatic phenomenality's determinations come into play: an intuitive content enters the light, holds itself there in a gaze, constitutes its theme. On the other hand, if it leaves the center of this clearing, gaining the marginal fringes of consciousness, finally stepping across the horizon of every obstantial presence, it becomes virtual once again. Virtuality and potentiality designate that fabulous place invented by the mythologies of the unconscious to guard the maintenance and consistence of what held itself ex-posed in the site opened by ek-stasis—to retain them once they are no longer there, with the characteristics that were theirs when they were there. As if this type of presence, of maintenance, of consistence consisting in the objection of the objected, in the ex-position of the ex-posed, could truly endure and maintain itself in the absence of the latter. The ex-posed and the juxta-posed, the horizontal-ecstatic, define the general law of being, even in the absence of ecstasis and horizon, in the absence in any case

of what is produced by them, namely, the light of phenomenality and consciousness. Conscious and unconscious are the same, the ex-posed and the juxta-posed, with the slight difference that with the unconscious, the ex-posed and the juxta-posed are deprived of the light that belongs to all ex-position as such. Actuality and potentiality (or virtuality) are also the same, have the same structure, accompanied by consciousness in the first case, deprived of it in the second, as if consciousness were indifferent to the structure that constitutes it.

Life never actualizes itself, never enters the finite locus of light. It stays entirely out of it, in the immediation of its self-omnipresence. For life, the terms *actuality*, *virtuality*, and *potentiality* have another sense: *actuality* designates the self-affection in which potentiality is actual, the reality of the possibility consubstantial to all power and identical to its essence. What is actual is not what arrives for a moment in the precondition of the ob-stant, but more essentially, *what never enters that condition*, what persists and remains in itself, in its infrangible self-attachment: the untiring accomplishment of life. Depending on whether we regard its ek-static seeing or the semblance where this seeing remains eternally in itself, we will be obliged to ask different questions about the soul. If the cogito's intuition and self-evidence are in question, as in every case involving ex-posure to a seeing, it is proper to ask: "That is certain. But for how long?"¹⁷ If, on the other hand, it is not a matter of science or its knowledge, if the cogito is no longer understood as an intuition, even the primary one, but as totally excluding every possible intuition and self-evidence, as life's faceless essence—then, of anyone who is considered in this fashion, in the material reality of his own thought, we must say: "In no way can he not know this in himself through a continual and infallible experience."¹⁸

The amphibole of the fundamental concepts of the phenomenology implied by the Cartesian cogito is witnessed by its immediate successors. Leibniz immediately recognized that life does not resolve itself in the clarity of knowledge, that it contains a nocturnal dimension irreducible to the light that the *Regulae* had circumscribed as science's precondition and, more profoundly, as constituting man's

being and relation to the world. Nevertheless, he decided not to examine this most ancient essence of being and life. Keeping his gaze fixed on being-in-the-world, he imagined it deprived of its innermost precondition but still accomplishing its work in the universe's deployment and maintenance. Instead of saying there is an *aperceptio* without *perceptio*, he declared the opposite: there is a *perceptio* without *aperceptio*: "We are never without *perceptions* but we are necessarily often without *apperceptions*, viz.: when there are no distinct perceptions."¹⁹ Concurrent with and as the origin of a totally erroneous definition of life, the concept that would later become the operative concept of psychoanalysis, that of unconscious perception, was born.

With the presupposition of a *perceptio* without *aperceptio* and the affirmation that such a *perceptio* is unconscious, Leibniz advances the most philosophical and the most antiphilosophical thesis in Western thought's entire history, the thesis that would also weigh the most heavily on its destiny. To say that every *perceptio* without *aperceptio* is unconscious means that no perception is possible or subsists by itself. No seeing reduced to itself can see anything at all unless it first reveals itself to itself as seeing, and this must be done in and by the *aperceptio*. Leibniz has the presentiment that no thought is possible without a corresponding formal reality, without its original *aperceptio*, but he misunderstands the nature of the *aperceptio*, reducing it to that of the *perceptio* itself. Thus the crucial intuition of appearance's immediation, glimpsed for a moment in Cartesianism, is immediately lost.

Is it even possible to speak of a reduction of the *aperceptio* to the *perceptio*? In truth, Leibniz knows only perceptions, of which he distinguishes two types: those that are apperceived or "notable" ("pain," for example, is a "notable perception") and those that are not: obscure or unconscious perceptions. Why aren't they perceptible? Because they are too small or too numerous, "too small to be apperceived."²⁰ Too small because too numerous, pressing in to occupy the closed space of light contained in every *perceptio*. The finitude of ek-stasis, excluding all or almost all beings, makes them both too numerous and too small. Why do beings now press into the clearing of being?

Because in Leibniz another conception is added to perception's phenomenological concept, one of a prescientific, psychophysical type. According to this concept, since the soul is always and completely united with its body and through its body with the other bodies that compose the universe,²¹ all of these bodies continuously affect it, provoking in it a multitude of impressions, of feelings that it perceives without being able to apperceive them. Two conceptions of affection occur in Leibniz. One is grossly realist, ignorant of the fact that affection means appearing or self-presentation of feeling. This conception is therefore ontic, situated outside reduction. Instead, it presupposes union, speaking of the "action" or "impression" of one body on another or on the soul. It identifies affection with that "action" or "impression" and misses their double sense. The other conception is ontological. It rests on seeing's finitude. These two conceptions are superimposed, and their confusion produces the Leibnizian theory of imperceptible, obscure, or unconscious perceptions: "expressing" those of the body, the "impressions" of the soul constitute its infinitely rich and infinitely renewed contents. Since its contents are infinite, the soul cannot hold them completely in its finite view. Therefore, it pays attention only to some, while the others are like objects that surround us during our sleep: "For we always have objects which strike our eyes and ears, and, as a result, the soul is touched also, without our taking notice of it, because our attention is bent upon other objects."²²

Thus the deterioration of *aperceptio*'s crucial concept is obvious. The problem of thought's self-immanence in *videor*'s semblance is posed when Philalethes says, "It is not easy to conceive that a thing can think and not feel that it thinks," and Theophilus responds, "There is, doubtless, the knot of the affair." The possibility or necessity of thought without *aperceptio* is not established by Leibniz through an analysis of the latter and its structure but contrarily by excluding it and replacing it with seeing's finitude. Because apperception means seeing, the content held in the finite horizon of ek-stasis overflows it on all sides and is lost in the night. This, therefore, is why thought can think and not feel that it thinks, because "we think of

many things at a time, but we attend only to the thoughts which are most distinct, and the process cannot go on otherwise."²³ To be "without *apperceptions*" means to be without "distinct perceptions."²⁴ The reduction of the *aperceptio* to *perceptio* and, even more limiting, to distinct perceptions becomes absolutely blinding when apperception is taken to mean reflection upon, and this is precisely Theophilus's ultimate argument: if it is necessary to reject Descartes's central affirmation that "there is nothing in the soul which it does not apperceive," it is because

it is impossible for us always to think expressly upon all our thoughts; otherwise, the spirit would reflect upon each reflection to infinity without ever being able to pass to a new thought. For example, *in my apperceiving some present feeling*, I should always think that I think, and still think that I think of my thought, and thus to infinity. But it is necessary that I cease reflecting upon all these reflections, and that there be at length some thought which is allowed to pass without thinking of it; otherwise, we should dwell always upon the same thing.²⁵

"That there be at length some thought which is allowed to pass without thinking of it" arises from perception or reflection's inability to unveil the soul's entire content. But this inability is even more radical than Leibniz imagines: it disallows even the exception of our present perception or reflection's content. In fact, because apperception is neither partial nor total seeing of an infinite intuition, it excludes a priori every content of that sort. It is the exclusion of every possible seeing, the dimension of radical immanence in which ek-stasis is impossible.

The position adopted by Malebranche was much more pertinent and profound. In a single glance it encompasses the essential dichotomy of phenomenality's fundamental structures—that the cogito does not mean *one* thing, but *two*, not only different but so fundamentally opposed that their original togetherness and hence their co-original being-together is one of philosophy's major problems. Is it not extraordinary that the most Cartesian of the Cartesians was led to say exactly the opposite of what its author said about the irreducible and incontestable phenomenon that the doctrine explicitly posits as

its point of departure and absolutely certain support? In fact, Malebranche says that the cogito is not a self-evidence, not the clearest of all, but an abyss of obscurity; not a knowing, not the primary one, but something totally unknowable. Consequently, he states that soul is not easier to know than body but on the contrary is unknowable. Furthermore, he asserts that knowledge of soul can be acquired only by analogy with and based on knowledge of body and, finally, that the idea of soul, instead of being the precondition and foundation of all knowledge, cannot play such a role because ultimately it does not exist. Astonishingly, however, even with such propositions and their point-by-point opposition to the cardinal theses of Cartesianism, Malebranche, far from breaking with them, proposes their first and perhaps last radical repetition. He returns to the most initial beginning glimpsed by Descartes, releasing it abruptly in metaphysical vision's fulguration.

According to Malebranche's repeated affirmation, the soul's "obscurity" means first and foremost that soul is not illuminated by ek-static light because it does not contain, nor is it constituted by, that ek-stasis. As obscure, soul originally escapes the world's phenomenality. Since soul is not nothing, its exclusion of transcendental exteriority does not push it into nonphenomenality's nothingness but allows the phenomenologically material appearance of the first appearance's actuality and designates it in its radical interiority as affectivity. Whereas all things in the world, bodies and their properties, are known by their ideas, "such is not the case with the soul, [which] we do not know through its idea. . . . We know it only through *consciousness*."²⁶ And that consciousness excludes *videre* and is identical to *videor*'s original semblance. It is an "inner sensation" by which we feel what happens in us, so that nothing happens in us that we don't feel and experience by that sensation, which constitutes soul's essence and all its modifications—"all those things that cannot be in the soul without the soul being aware of them through the inner sensation it has of itself."²⁷ Thus the Cartesian *aperceptio*, insofar as its structure is located in interiority and its phenomenological substantiality in affectivity, receives a radical ontological determination.

Unfortunately, Malebranche himself could not remain on the summit of absolute beginnings. The very radicalness of his intuition of soul's immanence and exclusion of representational transcendence led him to the paradoxical conclusion that all determinations that assume representational form must also be excluded from the sphere of immanence: "The ideas which represent to us things outside us are not modifications of our soul."²⁸ Here Malebranche loses the cogito's ultimate intuition. This intuition states that actual self-sensing seeing is made possible by seeing's self-appearance, which occurs in the original semblance that assembles and essentializes itself precisely in immanence. By denying that representations are inherent in the soul, by excluding their formal reality and accepting only their objective reality, by failing to perceive that self-interiority is the necessary precondition of ek-static development, Malebranche inaugurates the inescapable situation in which exteriority is left to itself, hypostatized, and founded entirely upon itself. This situation then gives rise to the question concerning exteriority's possible receptiveness, the question whether any "subject" can open itself to and hold its gaze in exteriority. In fact, this is really the problem of that subject and its subjectivity, a subjectivity that is nothing but the self-immanence of ek-stasis, and this problem is henceforth deprived of solution.

But that's not all. Even though Malebranche recognized soul's essence in the structure of radical immanence, he remained a prisoner to knowledge's prejudice that reduces all conceivable phenomenality to that of ek-stasis. Excluding ek-stasis no longer leads to appearance's original dimension but to its absence, and as such, indicates an insurmountable ontological inadequacy. The soul's obscurity thus becomes its intrinsic nonphenomenality, a sort of raw facticity: "a vague feeling that strikes you, once again, *a feeling without light, which cannot enlighten you; a feeling that cannot teach you who you are.*"²⁹ Insofar as it makes itself felt without making itself known, feeling alone cannot accomplish the work of revelation; it seeks revelation in an outside power. Self-affection's self-feeling no longer delivers it completely over to itself as it is in itself but seeks self-revelation in an agency different from itself. Therefore, it is "blind" in itself. Its

situation has once again become that of beings. A feeling that does not accomplish in itself the work of revelation, in what power is it supposed to seek this revelation? In the power of the idea, of ek-stasis. No philosophy situates pure phenomenality's site more explicitly or more exclusively in exteriority as such, as transcendental exteriority, as "intelligible extension," than Malebranche's.

The significance of the thesis that we have no idea of the soul now changes completely. It no longer apodictically determines revelation's internal structure but, on the contrary, confining revelation to the power of exteriority, assertorically states that the soul is in fact deprived of that power and as such, is delivered over to night: the "shadows" of the soul; "I am only shadows to myself."³⁰ We can see that every possible phenomenality consists of ek-static light, which Malebranche calls vision in God, since the soul itself can be enlightened only if it ex-poses itself in an image outside itself, which is its archetype in God, so that true being and, this time, all light of the soul is its own exteriority in relation to itself, which is its Idea, which thus exists, but in God, namely in exteriority. However, God has refused us the contemplation of this Idea here on earth because its splendor would turn us away from the accomplishment of our daily duties.³¹ The philosopher who got closest to the beginning also broke furthest from it. In this way, just as for Leibniz, Malebranche belongs to the destiny of Western metaphysics, historically determined in *videor's* occultation by *videre*.

3

The Insertion of the "Ego Cogito" in the "History of Western Metaphysics"

With Heidegger, the cogito's denaturation is operative from the start and brought to its climax. Phenomenality's beginning essence, as seen in *videor*, is not merely reduced to or confounded with *videre*. Its existence is not even suspected: "I think" means "I represent."¹ Thus the proceedings initiated against Descartes must first be put in their place and their true extent recognized. They are concerned not with the original cogito or its interlinked phenomenological concepts but only their decline after the beginning's initiality has already been lost. For the purposes of the present critique, however, it is not important whether Heidegger proposed a historically questionable or partial interpretation of Descartes's thought. What is important are the stakes in such an interpretation, the ultimate nature of the truth of being itself. The Heideggerian reading is not limited to an examination of Cartesianism but inscribes its theses in a much more general conception of the history of Western metaphysics, which in turn is paradoxically identified with that of being. According to Heidegger, the cogito newly defines "the essence of knowledge and of truth."² This is not a mere ideological mutation; not only our thought of being but being's very essence is essentially modified.

What is this modification? The foundation of all things—to *hypo-keimenon*, *das von sich aus schon Vorliegende* (what is always already posed-before from itself) (*Nietzsche*, 96; translation modified)—the *subjectum*, comes to be interpreted as man. In each epoch of its history, being sends itself to us in such a way that it gives itself in the retreat of its ownmost being. With the cogito, which inaugurates the metaphysics of modern times, that clouding attains its zenith. Man takes himself as *subjectum*, usurping the prerogatives of being and claiming to send them into play. He poses himself as the foundation of truth and erects himself in each domain as the center and measure of all that is. Negatively speaking, "man's liberation in the new freedom" (*Nietzsche*, 100) is the rejection of every other truth, "revealed, biblical, Christian," and so on; and positively, the extension of man's legislation, his "self-legislation," to all beings. But this "self-legislation," since it necessitates "self-assurance" and the ability to ensure his comportment in the midst of beings, implies that man first be "certain of himself." The cogito claims man's self-foundation to be the self-assurance (self-certainty) of the foundation of all possible truth.

If, however, we are to see the cogito's real aim, we must recognize that far from establishing man at the center of its problematic, it excludes him radically. This exclusion is accomplished in the reduction: what subsists has no eyes or ears, no body or worldly connection, nothing of the sort. What subsists is solely the "first appearance," as the pure and irreducible phenomenological actuality of its self-appearing. The idea of man, in established Cartesianism, comes to light only later when its gaze has already slipped from the cogito to the *cogitatum*; when, in the system of representation "*cogito-cogitata*," the consideration of one of the *cogitata* (the idea of God) and its strange character leads to the thought that the system is, precisely, not a system and is not self-supporting. Man intervenes in Cartesianism only at the moment when he is discovered to be finite, *ens creatum*, and thus nothing like a foundation.

But according to Heidegger himself, how does man aspire to such a role? Assuredly not as man but only as cogito. It is not a being but

an ontological structure and, what is more, the structure of pure phenomenality as such that claims to constitute the *fundamentum inconcussum veritatis*. In the Heideggerian commentary, "man" is quite arbitrarily said to interfere with the Cartesian "subject," or with the subjectivity that is baptized "human" subjectivity. The question is solely concerned with phenomenality's essence, the essence of "thought" and its possible reduction to that of representation.

Such a reduction, according to Heidegger, characterizes Cartesianism and more generally all of modern subjectivity. *Cogitare* means *percipere*, "to take possession of a thing, to seize something, in the sense of presenting-to-oneself by way of presenting-before-oneself, *representing*." Because *cogitare-percipere* means "to pose before oneself," it means the same thing as *Vorstellung*, in the sense of both *vorstellen* and *vorgestelltes*, namely, "the bringing-before-itself and what-is-brought-before-itself and made 'visible' in the widest sense" (Nietzsche, 104–5). In representation's "bringing-before-itself," the represented is not only given but dis-posed as available, established, and ensured as that over which man can reign as master. With *cogitare*'s link with *dubitare*, which it rejects but from which it comes, *cogitare* is in rapport with the indubitable, its action of posing-before "accepts nothing as posed-in-surety (*sicher-gestellt*) and certain—that is, as true—which is not proven before thought itself." But if representation, as a posing-before, is "a posing-in-surety (*Sicher-stellen*)," what ultimately makes it possible—"what is to be posed-in-surety (*sicher-gestellt*)?"³

Along with Descartes's cogito comes the crucial question that we have purposely passed over in silence, just as it was passed over by Cartesianism itself and after that by the entire history of modern philosophy: the question of *ego*. What is the significance of the extraordinary fact that a return to the beginning and the universal principle of all things abuts on the position of the ego and, what is more, of a particular ego, not one that says "it is thought," not "there is,"⁴ but "I think, I am"? Is it because this return to the origin, developing according to the implication of its cardinal evidence, is accompanied by a particular empirical individual, Descartes on this

occasion, or anyone capable of repeating this interplay of implications? But the ego arises simultaneously with the cogito, at the end and as the result of the reduction, when there is no longer any individual or world. *Ego cogito* means anything but man, "human" subject, "human" subjectivity. *Ego cogito* means that in appearance's original arising, ipseity is implicated as its very essence and innermost possibility. Descartes expresses this essential contemporaneity of pure phenomenality and ipseity only in this form: "That it is I who am doubting and understanding and willing is so manifest that there is no way that it can be made more evident."⁵

The importance of beginnings in philosophy can be seen quite clearly from the fact that although Descartes took care to refer the connection of ipseity and thought to its ultimate essence, he didn't believe it necessary to pursue the elucidation of it any further, and thus ego's being has remained wholly indeterminate, so that the most gratuitous and contradictory affirmations concerning it have been produced throughout philosophy's history—even today with Husserl, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty—not to mention the voiding of the "subject" by the various thought systems external to the problematic and grouped under the rubric of "structuralism." As we will see, even Kant, no longer able to avoid the problem, was completely incapable of assigning any foundation whatsoever to the simple proposition "I am."

The interest in Heidegger's commentary on the cogito in Nietzsche lies in its direct confrontation of this question. Despite appearances, this confrontation does not take place on an ontic ("human") level but on one linked to phenomenality's pure essence. When it comes to establishing that essence in its own properness, that is, of recognizing it in its power of exhibition and, according to Descartes, of legitimization; in short, when it comes to founding the cogito, even though reduced to an "I represent," and when the "posing-before" must therefore appear as a "posing in all surety," the question arises: "What is to be posed-in-surety?" Ego carries the answer. It proposes itself not simply as united with representation but as constituting its intrinsic possibility, certainty, and assurance. "Every *ego*

cogito is a *cogito me cogitare*, every 'I represent something [pose something before myself] simultaneously represents a 'myself' [poses me before], me, the one representing (before myself, in my representing). Every human representing is—in a manner of speaking, and one that is easily misunderstood—a 'self'-representing [a 'self'-posing-before]" (*Nietzsche*, 106).

Obviously this doesn't mean that in every representation the ego pro-poses itself as a correlate,⁶ so that, for example, in representing the cathedral at Fribourg to myself, I must also simultaneously represent myself next to it as a vague and marginal object.⁷ The ego that re-presents itself pro-jects itself before itself and implicates itself in its own representation in a much more essential fashion and by an essential necessity: in its own representation, every possible representation is represented to the representing ego, before it, in-front of it.⁸ Thus the ego is presupposed in every representation, not a posteriori as the discovered object, but a priori as an intrinsic part of the field where all discovery is made, insofar as such a field is constructed precisely as thrown by ego, before it, in-front of it—because the retro-reference to the ego is identical to the structure and opening of that field.

Since he confuses the ego with man, Heidegger can then write: "Because in every representing there is a representing person *to* whom what is represented in representation is presented, the representing person is involved with and in every representing—not subsequently, but in advance, in that he, the one who is placing *before* [or re-presenting], brings what is represented before *himself*" (*Nietzsche*, 107). Therefore, if the ego is thus implicated in the structure of representation as the before-which of every represented and as the implicit end of that retro-reference, it follows that every consciousness of an object, as consciousness of a re-presented, is also and above all self-consciousness, consciousness of self, of that self objected to the horizon of representation as its foundation. For the Self is properly sub-jacent to representation, extending itself under it as that from which it throws itself and to which, thrown beyond Self, it returns. Heidegger writes: "For representation . . . the *self* of man is

essential as what lies at the very ground. The self is *sub-jectum*" (*Nietzsche*, 108).

In this way, a theory of the ego and its being is constituted, a theory of the "I am," which claims to explain Descartes's fundamental proposition: *ego cogito ergo sum*. Once again, such an explanation, along with the theory of ipseity it contains, is based on a crucial presupposition. In truth, this "explanation" is merely the development and in some way the simple reading of that presupposition, the presupposition that *cogito* means "I represent." Hence there is no conclusion leading from *cogito* to *sum*, but merely the recognition of an "I" who is necessarily deployed in the structure of representation and who, finally, is identical with it. This comes about in the following way: because every object is objected, op-posed in the representing to the one who does the representing, the representer is already there as the one who dis-poses the object in-front of himself,⁹ and who therefore and more fundamentally, in that dis-position *in-front of himself*, has already dis-posed himself. "For in the human representation of an object, and through the object *as* something standing-over-against and represented, that 'against-which' the object stands and 'before which' it is presented—that is, the one representing—has already presented itself. It has done so in such a way that man, by virtue of such presenting himself to himself as the one representing, can say 'I'" (*Nietzsche*, 112). And that is why (if we leave aside "man," who has no reason to be there except to retain the "I" immanent to representation) we can say there is no inference from *cogito* to *sum*, since the representer's *sum* (i.e., his dis-position in-front of himself in his representation) is identical to and constitutive of the representation. "The 'I' in its 'I am,' or to be more specific, the one representing, is known *in* and for such representing no less than the represented object. The I—as 'I am the one representing'—is *so* certainly presented to the representing that no syllogism, no matter how logical, can ever attain the certainty bound up with this presenting to himself of the one representing" (*Nietzsche*, 112–13).

If we return to Descartes's text, however, we find no allusion whatsoever to any problematic like the one developed in *Nietzsche* in

which ipseity is tributary to and comprehensible through the structure of representation. Quite the contrary, the brief, enigmatic, and fulgurant irruption of ego in the second Meditation is situated at that ultimate moment of the reduction when doubt is alone in the world, or more exactly, when there is no more world and consequently no representation. Descartes then holds a purely immanent element reduced to itself, to itself alone, to its material reality, abstraction made of every objective reality, and it is precisely in this element that Descartes reads the ipseity of the ego. In this element, as identical with itself, with its essence, with its supreme essence: for there is nothing "beyond" in which one might more obviously recognize that eruption of ipseity, no essence in the more original manifestation to which the ego could manifest itself more originally—*tam manifestum est ut nihil occurrat per quod evidentius explicetur*. But that essence is one of manifestation. Hence the necessity of reanimating that double self-evidence: (1) the original essence of phenomenality excludes representation, and (2) it is precisely through the work of this exclusion that it essentializes itself in itself as a Self.

For our first demonstration, it will suffice to recall the previously cited passage from the *Passions of the Soul* (I, 26), which, taking reduction to its limit, affirms that everything represented, far from being ensured by that representation, becomes doubtful and uncertain; for example, everything that I think I see or imagine in pure representation, reduced to itself, "as in a dream," whereas "even if we are asleep and dreaming, we cannot feel sad, or moved by any other passion, unless the soul truly has this passion within it." Solely this self-immanence of affective determination, of sadness (or more generally, of what Descartes calls the material reality of the idea) constitutes the site of absolute certitude and truth, which, as self-certainty and self-referential, self-legitimizing truth, is precisely appearance's first appearing to and in itself. We can see that representation has nothing to do with phenomenality's original upwelling, because sensation—pain, for example—is entirely what it is in the immanence of its affectivity without first being posed before itself, in-front of itself: in order to be certain of itself, it has no need of that coming to ob-

stance; its suffering is sufficient. If we consider sensation in itself, as Descartes invites us to do, independent of its being-represented in body or object, we can see that it is precisely in itself, in the self-affectation of its affectivity, that being comes to it. On the contrary, in the exteriority of representation, outside the immanence of thought (the self-immanence of thought that is thought itself), "outside our mind, there is no way of understanding what sort of things [that pain and color and so on] are."¹⁰

The abyssal significance of Descartes's critique of secondary qualities becomes clear: the ultimate separation of the living from the dead. Sensations belong to life; they grow where life's being wells up, where there is neither ek-stasis nor world, in the radical interiority of what Descartes calls "soul." Obviously we will concede to the phenomenologists that there are transcendent qualities—the sky is blue, the stream is serene, and it really does seem to me that this pain is in my foot. But the quality that extends itself in the thing (the color on the painted surface, the pain in my foot) is nothing but the unreal representation, the objection of a real, living impression, which is self-affective and self-impressive only in its affectivity, so that where this self-sensing that determines affectivity as pure affective tonality, as pure impression, and as life, occurs, there is no space—neither that of things nor that of the organic body wherein impression is objected. Proof may be found in dreams, where space is an illusion but where the dreamer seems to see that the wall is yellow, or in the illusion of amputees who no longer have feet and yet feel pain in them: this pain's being is solely impressive, is pure self-impression. A more radical proof may be found in pure feelings (sadness or joy), which have no objective reality, only material reality, occurring completely within the soul and consequently owing nothing of their being to a representation in which they have no share.

But we must not merely contest Heidegger's affirmation that "representational thinking (*percipere, co-agitare, cogitare, repraesentare in uno*) is a fundamental characteristic of all human behavior, even nonepistemological behavior."¹¹ We must overturn it. Not only are the nonepistemological "behaviors," like feelings, passions, and will,

totally foreign to representation in Descartes, but this radical incompatibility constitutes and defines the cogito's original dimension. Therefore, even epistemological behaviors in their relation to cogito (the idea in its formal reality and as a mode of soul) are ignorant of representation. The Heideggerian parentheses grafted onto representation (*percipere, cogitare, repraesentare in uno*) is an amalgamation: the original *perceptio* and *cogitatio* have nothing to do with the *repraesentare in uno*, as can be seen in the *cogitatio*'s explicit definitions by immediation and in the multiple uses of the concept of *perceptio*, which refer to that same immanence. To mention only two examples, which immediately put an end to all argument: "Those [perceptions] having the soul as their cause are the perceptions of our volitions" (*Writings* I, 335). "We may define them [the passions of the soul] generally as those perceptions, sensations or emotions of the soul which we refer particularly to it" (*Writings* I, 338–39)—and more generally, as we have shown, the whole problematic of the *videor*.

But if it is impossible to ascend higher than that original immediation, then it must found the essence of ipseity, of ego. If Descartes was not preoccupied with further elucidating this ultimate instance, or even if he did not believe it possible to do so, that does not limit the fact that he explicitly situated in it, in thought's most primordial semblance, what makes it not only thought (being, the "there is") but an "I think, I am." Phenomenality's original phenomenization is accomplished as ipseity, since appearance appears to itself in immediate and distanceless self-affection, hence independent of ek-stasis and representation, so that what affects and shows itself to it is itself and not something else, its own reality and not something unreal, so that, affecting itself and constituting the content of its self-affection in itself as such, it is a Self, the Self of ipseity and life. For the Self is the identity between what affects and what is affected. It is being where there is nothing but itself, where "everything that is" is itself, and it itself is "everything that is." Descartes calls such being "soul." We call it life. For life is what experiences itself, and everything that it experiences, everything that affects it, affects it only on condition that it affect itself in itself. Whatever it is, everything that is alive bears

within it that essence of life, and only what is alive can be affected by anything else and the world.

Since ipseity resides in the original essence of thought, in the *videor* that precedes and makes possible every *videre*, the contrary pretension of founding the ego on representational seeing constitutes a paralogism that is all the more deceptive in that it takes advantage of an "appearance" and should be read and deconstructed as follows: it is true that every act of re-presentation, as self-representation (i.e., as a representation to oneself), as an act of self-ob-jection and self-opposition, implies that the re-presentation (the one who is representing) pro-jects itself to the horizon of its action as that to which and in-front of which is op-posed everything opposed to it. But it is not because the ob-jected and the op-posed are represented and opposed to it that representation is a Self. It is because representation is a Self and already carries the Self in itself that it can represent *to itself* what it represents, that it can pro-ject itself beyond the opposed as that to which and in-front of which the opposed is opposed, that it can and must oppose itself to itself first of all and dis-pose itself in-front of itself—that every ob-ject-consciousness is a self-consciousness. The Self is implicated in representation as its *sub-jectum* only because it is presupposed by representation, and presupposed as what representation does not produce, does not explain, but presupposes as representation's other, as the foundation that representation cannot found.

Therefore, all the propositions in which Heidegger claims to tie the ego to and extract it from representation must be overturned. To the claim that in the *ego cogito* "the 'I' is understood as the self, back to which representation as such is essentially referred and in that way is what it is" (*Nietzsche*, 115–16), we must respond that it is because the "I" is already understood in the *ego cogito*, because it is already essentialized in itself, outside of representation's structure, that the "I" is actually "what it is," what is already in possession of self as an *Itself* to be capable of representing *to itself* anything whatsoever.

We must also invert the statement that "because the relation to the one representing still belongs essentially to representing, because all representedness of what is represented is gathered back *to* it, there-

fore the one representing, who can thus call himself 'I,' is subject in an emphatic sense, is . . . the subject in the subject, back to which everything that lies at the very basis of representation refers" (*Nietzsche*, 114). For the one who is representing, to whom and toward whom every represented returns in the act of representation, can call himself "I" only if he already is "I," in and through himself, on the basis in him of ipseity's true essence. Otherwise it would be the same for the "I" of the "I represent" as it is for the tree that is said to reflect itself in the river and the reflection that the river returns. As if the fact of the image being posed before the tree and of its returning to the tree were enough to make the tree an ego; as if a reflexive pronoun were sufficient to cause the emergence of that ego's ipseity whenever it was required.

Someone might object, however, that the tree doesn't really represent its image to itself. Quite true: it cannot do so. Representation can pose before itself only what refers to its "self." It can project itself as the Self in-front of which all representedness deploys itself only if it is first a Self. The protential and retro-referential relations, far from being capable of constituting ipseity's essence, presuppose it. And this presupposition is double. First, it means that ipseity is immanent to representation as its precondition, since representation occurs solely through it. Second, it means that implicated in representation, ipseity is not explained by or founded on representation. It is not because there is a "before self" or an "in-front of self" that there is a Self, but on the contrary because there is a Self and because the essence of ipseity lives in it that anything whatsoever can determine itself in relation to that Self. But Self exists neither in the "before" nor in the "in-front of," which by themselves aren't even possible as such. The Self is a phenomenon of life, welling up in the radical interiority of its self-affection, simultaneous with and identical to it. That the "before" and the "in-front of" do not exist as such, by themselves, but only as "before self" and "in-front of self," preconditioned by that Self, means that interiority is the precondition of all exteriority. Self is the precondition of representation.

Heidegger's paralogism is more easily recognized if we refer to the

Cartesian context that it claims to clarify. For it is true that Descartes sought an absolutely unshakable foundation for truth, a final assurance and certainty, and he believed he had found it in the *ego cogito*. Because that ego must serve as support for the whole edifice of knowledge, it is important first to establish its consistency as it is identified with thought. But the question is precisely how such a consistency takes shape, what there is in the *ego cogito* that makes it self-legitimizing and self-founding in such a way that it can serve as a sure foundation for all the rest. "The consistency of my self as *res cogitans* consists in the secure establishment of representation, in the certitude according to which the self is brought before itself" (*Nietzsche*, 115; translation modified).

Two theses, carefully imbricated one within the other, are here advanced. The first is the definition of the ego as representation: "I am insofar as I represent." The second affirms that it is precisely as representation that the ego is certain and sure of itself, and this is because the ego firmly grasps itself in the act by which it poses itself before itself. Inasmuch as the ego "re-presents," "in the secure establishment of representation," "the certitude according to which the self is brought before itself" is born. In the assured structure of that positioning before itself of a Self firmly grasped by itself, it becomes possible for all truth and all certitude concerning what is collected in such a structure and carried by it to the precondition of the objected. Thus, as soon as the Self is defined as "re-presentation" and assured of itself as such, it assures itself, by the same token, of everything that it represents to itself: "Not only is *my* Being essentially determined through such representing, but . . . my representing, as definitive *re-praesentatio*, decides about the being present of everything that is represented; that is to say, about the presence of what is meant in it; that is, about its Being as a being." Therefore, the certitude of everything posed before the Self and thus re-presented by it (simultaneous with it), reposes on the prior certitude of the positing of Self before itself. "That to which everything is referred back as to an unshakable ground is *the full essence of representation itself*" (*Nietzsche*, 114).

But in beginning Cartesianism everything that is re-presented

and valid only by being placed upon the *sub-jectum* of representation, everything that appears in representation, in that pro-position of the Self to itself, is swept away by the reduction, thrown out of the domain of certainty and struck with nullity. This is so because the appearance produced in the opposition to self as identical to that appearance is incapable of assuring itself of itself because the seeing that moves within and borrows its light from that appearance is doubtful. Far from presenting itself as "an unshakable ground," the "full essence of representation itself" disintegrates and flies away in pieces. The radicalness of the Cartesian effort is measured by the rejection of a representation that may be illusory and by the fact that despite that rejection and everything implied by it, or rather thanks to it, a way is cleared toward a true foundation.

That this foundation is the ego is possible only on one condition: that it not be the ego of representation as such; that is, an *ego* whose ipseity has its essence in and is constituted by representation, *since* the structure of opposition is one of alterity, so that everything that shows itself to and affects the Self in such a structure is categorically other than itself. Affected by that other, the Self cannot be affected by itself and its own reality. In fact, it cannot be a Self, which affects itself and whose whole being is constituted by itself.

Furthermore, in Descartes, representation never pro-poses reality, what he calls formal reality, but only the idea's objective reality; *that* is, an image of reality, a double, a copy, an *unreal equivalent*, which is a figure of reality and refers to it but is not it. What occurs in representation is both the other and the unreal, namely, the opposite of the Cartesian ego, the Itself that contains and defines reality. That a self now pro-poses itself to itself in re-presentation and re-presents itself to itself can be understood only in a particular and restricted sense: the Self pro-jected in representation and thereby represented is nothing but a represented self, not the real Self that projects and poses before itself but an unreal Self, co-ob-jected to the horizon of representation as the accompaniment to every ob-jected, in that the ob-jected has the significance of being thrown before the self, in-front of the self. Thus the co-objected Self belongs to that significance as

the end (as unreal as the significance) implicated and referred to by that significance.

Now, on the one hand, the re-presented Self is possible only on the basis of the real Self and as its simple representation, its projection. But on the other hand, this unreal self is not "affected": nothing unreal or represented ever forms the site of a possible affection. Only what originally self-affects itself in itself can be the site of an affection: the real Self, the living Self. In reality, every represented is re-presented before, in-front of the living Self. The fact that this represented (in its conscious aim, in its representedness) implies an unreal self is only the expression of the real process of representation and of the essential fact that in representation every possible representation presents itself to a Self, a real Self. The supposed reading of ipseity in the structure of representation presupposes the confusion of the projecting, affected Self with the pro-jected Self, the reduction of projector to projected, a projected that presupposes and is the representation of the projector.

Another reason that representation never constitutes the foundation in beginning Cartesianism is that representation is incapable of defining not only the essence of ipseity but also that of certitude and truth. Although beings become true and certain solely in and through re-presentation (as posed before and dis-posed in-front of it, they show themselves and are therefore seen, true, and certain), their representation contains this certitude and truth only insofar as it is already true and certain in itself. According to Heidegger, it is precisely because the posing or dis-posing before or in-front of self is firm and assured that everything it contains is true and certain. This is not the case for Descartes: holding firmly before oneself, re-presenting, seeing, all these are still doubtful. Heidegger writes:

Something true is that which [representation] of [it]self clearly and distinctly brings before [it]self and confronts as what is thus brought before [it] (re-presented) in order to guarantee what is represented in such a confrontation. The assurance of such representation is certainty. What is true in the sense of being certain is what is real. The essence of the reality of what is real lies in the constancy and continuity of what is

represented in the certain representation. This constancy excludes the inconstancy of the wavering common to all representational thinking as long as it doubts. Representational thinking which is free of doubt is clear and distinct thinking.¹²

Descartes's doubt, however, doesn't attack merely the inconstancy of the "wavering" representation but all representation as such, including the representation that poses in a stable fashion, holding the represented firmly before itself and maintaining it in the light of its self-evidence. Since the doubt is not a mode of representation but is lodged in its essence, what is "free of doubt" can no longer be this representation itself, even if it is clear and distinct. Beginning Cartesianism in its entirety is concentrated on the search for and bringing to light of a foundation for representation, an absolute certitude that far from consisting of "the assurance of representation" (which in itself has precisely none), must rather establish it.

Such a task is given over to the ego. Not to the ego projected in and by re-presentation, the re-presented *ego* that is as doubtful as its representation and whose very possibility, as we have seen, must first of all be recognized, the essence of its ipseity. Only a problematic that doesn't found itself on representation, on its seeing and on what it sees, can found representation. This problematic must first establish seeing's existence; that is, its self-sensing, so that (even if every representation is false) the original phenomenon of self-affection continues outside of representation and its seeing. It is in that original form of thought by which thought comes immediately into itself, independent of all re-presentation, in the anti-essence of representation, not in representation, that Descartes sought the absolute certitude that must found the certitude of representation itself. Before extending the reign of representation and science to infinity, before offering the entire world to devastation, beginning Cartesianism first marked it with an unsurpassable limit.

Heidegger's interpretation of the *ego cogito* is not innocent; from its grave lacunae it extracts the benefit that undoubtedly constitutes its unavowed goal: the insertion of that ego into "the history of Western metaphysics." Not that Heidegger mistook Cartesianism's

originality; on the contrary, Cartesianism, in the history that begins with Plato and concludes with Nietzsche's doctrine of values and the domination of the earth by will, is given as accomplishing a true reversal, that of "the transformation (*Umschlag*) of *idea* into *perceptio*," which is said to be "decisive" (Nietzsche, 174). Such a "transformation," it is true, appears more and more relative in that far from being the interruption or reversal of a state of things, it marks, according to Heidegger himself, the coming to light and liberation of an essential trait proper to the *idea* but "at first veiled and reserved." But this trait, the trait that "makes possible and conditions," is neither secondary nor subsequent: it is precisely the trait that makes Western thought into a metaphysics, the interpretation of being and its truth in terms of beings, and it does so as what conditions beings, as their condition of possibility.

How does the Platonic *idea* already carry within itself the trait that makes beings possible? How does it present itself at the dawn of Western thought as the a priori condition of possibility of beings? By preliminarily pro-posing itself to man's sight as the aspect of those beings, as the visible form wherein they become visible themselves, so that solely this primal relation of the gaze to the *idea's* visibility gives it access to the world of the senses. This is why philosophy's mission is to turn the gaze from the sensible content that first exclusively occupies it toward what properly opens beings to the gaze. This a priori intelligibility of the *idea*, as the condition of possibility of the openness toward beings, or rather as constituting that openness, is the manner of being of those beings, their beingness, their *Seiendheit*, and Platonism is already a metaphysics since it no longer thinks the truth of being in itself but as beingness and, clearing the way from Aristotle to Kant, as what in them becomes a "category" of beings.

How, then, is the transformation of *idea* into *perceptio* defined? How do the two differ? The *idea* takes the visibility it consists of and will constitute that of beings, its presence, from itself and thus proposes itself as a *hupokeimenon*, as what poses itself in advance as the sub-jacent and foundation of what it founds, but it does so on the basis of itself. Even though the Greek "appearance" is that of beings,

it still flows out of and produces itself. This aspect continues to shine through the Platonic *idea*. Posing itself in advance before man and preceding his regard, transcendent in relation to him, the *idea* proposes itself to man, opening him to its light and through that light to beings.

When Descartes interprets being as "I think"—that is, if we believe Heidegger, as "I represent"—being is apprehended as beingness, as an a priori condition of possibility of beings. Beings are posed in being only in that they are represented; that is, posed before, objected, placed at the disposition of the one who objects them. Their property of being, their beingness, is thus their capacity to be represented, their representedness (*Vorgestelltheit*). "Representedness as beingness makes what is represented possible as beings. Representedness (being) becomes the condition of possibility of what is represented and dis-posed in-front and thus comes to stand; that is, the condition of possibility of the object" (*Nietzsche*, 174; translation modified). However, the visibility that comes to beings through their representedness no longer comes to them through themselves. Now it is man who gives beings their visibility since he is the one who produces the representedness. He is the one who re-presents, who throws before and dis-poses in-front of himself the field wherein beings will be represented before him, by him, to him, in-front of him. "The *idea* becomes the *perceptum* of a *perceptio*; becomes what the representing of man brings before itself, precisely as what makes the to-be-represented possible in its representedness. Now the *idea* changes from visibility and presence to representedness for and through the one who is representing" (*Nietzsche*, 174).

Because man's ego, throwing itself before itself, produces the structure of representedness as the essence of visibility (and thus as the a priori condition of possibility of beings), man poses himself, by the same token, as the *sub-jectum* and the absolute foundation of each thing. "Man is *subjectum* in the distinctive sense" (*Nietzsche*, 119). "Man *is*, however, in that he represents" (175). "In Descartes's metaphysics, in what way *is* man himself, and as what does he know himself? Man is the distinctive ground underlying every representing

of beings and their truth, on which every representing and its represented is based and must be based" (119).

This definition of man as subject marks the start of modern times. Henceforth, each thing *is* through man alone. Because the being of beings is their representedness—that is, their capacity of being represented by man—because now the only thing of value is what is dis-posed in-front of him, posed in surety as an object for the subject-man and thus known; the "method" consists of nothing but this grasping and firm dis-position in-front of man of what is thus ensured and certain. In this way, man, through his representation, gives the measure, and since that representation is his affair, his self-representing gives itself as the measure. But beings (measured and dis-posed in this way) are guaranteed by that measure only if that measure is itself ensured, that is, if man has preliminarily assured himself of himself in that self-representation ("it is decisive that . . . man . . . is continually certain and sure of himself" [*Nietzsche*, 120]), and this is what occurs in the cogito.

It is then easy to oppose Greek thought—in this instance, that of Protagoras—to "Descartes's fundamental metaphysical position" in which man occupies the center. Far from recuperating the world in the act of representing it to himself, man is defined for Protagoras by his preliminary belonging to the ambience of the nonocculted. For Protagoras, beingness is not representedness but the presence at the heart of the nonocculted. So if man is the measure, it is not because he takes himself to be the measure but because he measures himself in relation to that ambience of nonoccultation and its limits. Whether it is a question of Plato or Protagoras, the primary is never man but the truth of being, even if in the form of beingness to which man attunes himself.

These well-known Heideggerian theses, apparently legitimized through constant repetition, lose their appearance of truth concerning a fallen Cartesianism and its historical role in the formation of modern culture and the world it controls (and their global pertinence in regard to the world of knowledge and technology) as soon as one thinks to compare them to the original cogito. The radical reduction

excludes both man and his power of representation (or rather its essence). Not only is the paradoxical introduction of beings into an analysis of phenomenality's pure essence contestable (the word *man* never appears in the texts of the reduction except to be rejected), but, as we have shown, the structure of pure phenomenality and its original actualization, far from being based on that of representation, excludes it insurmountably.

If nonetheless the first of these problems must here be taken up again briefly, it is because "man" is finally nothing but a figurehead, a mask for a problem of a different order, an ontological problem. From this point of view, the interpretation of modern subjectivity as the ascent of man, as well as this interpretation's revindication of the subject's status, as if subjectivity could be defined by man's enigmatic eruption into it instead of by eidetic analysis, by the internal structure of pure phenomenality—all this is less naive than it appears since in "man" and through him the ultimate possibility of appearance as such is at stake. When man becomes the subject, he furnishes it with his own content. And since everyone knows what man is, everyone also knows what the subject is. Once it is identified with man, the Cartesian subject no longer offers any real mystery. But as we have seen, this subject-man, once Heidegger reduces it to the subject of representation, designates nothing but the structure of representation and what makes that structure possible, namely, an ontological structure—anything but a being.

But first let us consider the Greek world: In it man occupies his place, a modest one, since being, "insofar as Being 'is'" (*Nietzsche*, 161), is understood as "It itself,"¹³ to *hypokeimenon*, that is, as *physis*—"as rising forth from itself and thus essentially self-presenting in upsurgence, self-revealing in the open region" (*Nietzsche*, 161). Only because they belong to *physis* and arise in its upsurgence can beings, which thus appear and are placed on view in it, offer themselves to man's sight. The *idea* is nothing but that placing on view of beings, a consequence of the *physis* on the one hand and what gives man access to beings on the other. But this second property tends to veil the first.

Because the *idea* opens an access to beings for man, thus determining itself as those beings's a priori condition of possibility, it presents itself as the source of their appearance, which nevertheless resides in *physis*. It is no longer the upsurge of beings in *physis* that founds their placing on view: it is now the placing on view that makes the upsurge possible. But once the placing on view ceases to be thought in terms of the upsurge of *physis* and is detached from its foundation so that it begins to float freely before man's gaze, why doesn't it find its principle in that gaze, in man himself? The dissimulation of *physis* by the "placing in view" makes possible the transformation of *idea* into Cartesian *perceptio*, into "I represent." I, man, cause all things to come into appearance. In and by my act of representing them, I am the master.

But however modest and measured a place man might occupy in Greek thought, doesn't he already intervene in it? Doesn't he already play a role, one more important than Heidegger might like to admit, and in short, one that is essential? Isn't it man who while beings present themselves to his view in the placing on view that is his *idea*, at least have the power to contemplate that idea, to open himself to it and to seeing? More originally, doesn't premetaphysical man, the Greek man immersed in *physis*, also have the capacity to attune himself with that dawning of presence that it dispenses to him and wherein everything shows itself to him? But if we are supposed to think like Greeks, we should turn to Heidegger himself and ask him how, in his philosophy, man is disposed in relation to the fundamental question he asks. For it is impossible to maintain the imputation to metaphysics of the role attributed to man if it is true that (whether for Descartes, the Greeks, or Heidegger) man intervenes in the question of being neither *as* a being nor in his *relation* to other beings.

Not in his relation to beings: for in fact man cannot relate to beings unless he first relates to being. Only in the light of being and as preliminarily open to the flash of that light can man open himself to what is lit by it—beings. So man's opening to being, as such, is more original than his opening to beings. In that preliminary opening of

man to being and its truth, beings are not questioned: the problematic that undertakes such an interrogation is not metaphysics. It is the thought of being.

Nor as a being: for man relates to being in thought, not as a being. "Thinking accomplishes the relation of Being to the essence of man" (BW, 193). The elimination of beings from the question of being first occurs by substituting man's essence for man. The consequence of such a substitution is the rejection of metaphysical humanism, of every conception of man as a being, as *homo animalis* and (in virtue of his specific difference from the animal in general) as rational animal, in favor of a humanism that perhaps no longer merits the name, a humanism wherein the true *humanitas* of *homo humanus* is finally born. A "strange" *humanitas* wherein man is no longer anything but "being," a moment of pure appearance that, as thought, reposes in and truly belongs to appearance. In fact, this is the new situation offered to a problematic capable of deliberately situating itself as independent of and beyond all metaphysics, the taking into account no longer of man or of beings but of what founds them both, owing nothing to either: the pure relation of thought to being, the original connection that unites them.

There is no longer any need to ask how such a problematic can pose itself as a critique of Descartes's cogito, which did nothing but exclude man and beings, explicitly rejecting the definition of man as rational animal, in order to promote an absolutely new essence of *humanitas* as appearance's *eidos*, as pure appearance, in and by itself identical to being. In the radical reduction of being to appearing, which takes the form of an essential connection between thought and being, the question is rather where is the ultimate difference between the nonmetaphysical positions of Descartes and Heidegger?

Behind Heidegger's "man" is not exactly being but thought and a certain conception of being. Man, as thought, a transcendental man who has left behind every categorial determination relative to beings, is nothing but ek-sistence. As thought, he opens himself to being in the ecstatic existential determination that throws itself into and holds itself in exteriority, the place of every possible holding of oneself, the

place of being. Being is there, as "holding itself before," as "posing itself before," and thus as "pro-posing itself to," as "offering itself to." Thought is what joins itself to what holds itself before and thus offers itself before it, attracts it to itself. How does thought join to what holds itself before it? By ek-sisting in it. How does being enjoin thought to join with it? By holding itself before and opening itself to it so that thought will open itself to being. In the opening of thought to being and conjointly in the opening of being to thought is *Er-eignis*, the original phenomenon, the first embrace wherein phenomenology comes forth. Are the opening of thought to being and being to thought the same? Is not "the eye through which being gazes at me" and "the eye through which I gaze at being" one and the same eye?¹⁴ Between thought and being there is no reciprocity. If "thinking accomplishes the relation of Being to the essence of man," to itself, "it does not make or cause the relation" (BW, 193). If, in conformity with its *eidos*, thought is ek-sistence, it is by throwing itself out of itself into the truth of being that it comes to being, thus accomplishing the "ecstatic" relation of the essence of man to the truth of Being. But this relation is as it is not by reason of ek-sistence; on the contrary, the essence of ek-sistence derives existentially-ecstatically from the essence of the truth of Being" (BW, 212). All the Heideggerian texts after *Sein und Zeit* untiringly reaffirm the reversal by which the final possibility of transcendental truth does not reside in man—that is, in thought—but outside him in the preliminary dimension of being's own truth, so that as *Sein und Zeit* already stated, "Being is the *transcendens* pure and simple."¹⁵ This is why "in the determination of the humanity of man as ek-sistence what is essential is not man but Being—as the dimension of the *ecstasis* of ek-sistence" (BW, 213). Being is the essential because it opens the "dimension of the *ecstasis* of ek-sistence" in which "there is Being (*es gibt das Sein*)," so that being is what gives the "there is," that is, gives itself, gives and accords its truth. Again, this is why if ek-sistence throws itself out of itself into the truth of being, it is solely because the truth of being has preliminarily thrown ek-sistence into the project wherein, dejected, ek-sistence can then throw itself into being. "Moreover, the projection is

essentially a thrown projection. What throws in projection is not man but Being itself, which sends man into the ek-sistence of *Da-sein* that is his essence" (*BW*, 217).

Here the critique of Descartes finds its precise motive if it is true that in the cogito interpreted as an "I represent," man (or ego) throws before himself the space of representedness wherein he gathers and refers every represented as such to himself. The motivation of that critique becomes explicit when, having reaffirmed that only the "view" wherein the lighting of being deploys itself has the power to draw man toward itself (*Anblick erst zieht Hin-sicht auf sich*), Heidegger deplores the abandon with which that view yields to and becomes lost in the aspect (the Cartesian *perceptio*) that the view caused to rise toward itself. "This view first gathers the aspect to itself. It yields to such aspects when apprehending has become a setting-forth-before-itself in the *perceptio* of the *res cogitans* taken as the *subiectum* of *certitudo*" (*BW*, 211).

Consequently, far from reposing upon itself, the view that ek-sists in the truth of being is founded on that truth and its preliminary opening. How is ek-sistence founded on the preliminary opening of the truth of being? How does it open itself to that opening? Are there two openings? Or only one, a single eye? Commenting on the *es gibt*, being's self-giving, Heidegger writes: "The self-giving into the open, along with the open region itself is Being itself" (*BW*, 214). How does ek-sistence hold itself in that opening? How does it ek-sist there? Not by itself but through the giving of being, through the opening, in and by it. "Only so long as the lighting of Being comes to pass does Being convey itself to man." The lighting of being come is being's concern and not man's. "But the fact that the *Da*, the lighting as the truth of Being itself, comes to pass is the dispensation of Being itself. This is the destiny of the lighting" (*BW*, 216).

But how is lighting destined? Doesn't its fashion of coming, its destiny, willed by the being and destiny of being itself, carry man in itself by virtue of the necessary and hence insurmountable moment of its accomplishment? Wouldn't being therefore transmit itself to man only insofar as its lighting comes, just as its lighting would come

only insofar as it is transmitted to man? It is a significant fact of this circularity that nearly all the texts affirming ek-sistence's inherence in the truth and destiny of being add a finality to that inherence, the finality of ultimately making such a destiny possible. Being throws man into ek-sistence, destining him to it, consequently throwing him into the truth of ek-sistence, but it does so in order for man to watch over that truth, as if that truth, as if the lighting of being, lighted up only when man ek-sisted in it. Volume III of *Nietzsche* declares: "Man belongs to the essence of Being and from such belonging is destined to an understanding of being" (216). "Belonging to Being, because thrown by Being into the preservation of its truth and claimed for such preservation, it thinks Being" (*BW*, 236). Such is the thought of being according to the *Letter on Humanism*: "Man is rather 'thrown' from Being itself into the truth of Being, so that ek-sisting in this fashion he might guard the truth of Being" (*BW*, 210). "What is essentially—that is, from Being itself—at issue here [is ek-sistence], insofar as Being appropriates man as ek-sisting for guardianship over the truth of Being into this truth itself" (*BW*, 224). Thus the enigma of *Geworfenheit* is clarified: if man is in the condition of being thrown, if he deploys his essence "as the ek-sisting counter-throw (*Gegen-wurf*) of Being," it is because he is "called by Being itself into the preservation of Being's truth" (*BW*, 221). And that is why, in the end, "the essence of man is essential for the truth of Being" (*BW*, 224).

But why? Why does man—or rather his essence, ek-sistence—belong essentially to the truth of being; that is, to the essence of that truth, to its innermost possibility? Rigorously stated, the question is Why does the lighting of being clarify only insofar as man ek-sists in it? As for every crucial question, let us ask, as Heidegger did, for the "essential help of phenomenological seeing" (*BW*, 234). The question then becomes Phenomenologically, what is the lighting of being? What is the nature of its specific phenomenality? Phenomenologically, what is its ek-sistence? We already know one thing—that the phenomenality of ek-sistence is identical to the phenomenality of lighting. This is the reason why lighting founds ek-sistence: because

it furnishes ek-sistence's own phenomenality; because all ek-sistence is an ek-sistence in lighting. To ek-sist means to hold oneself outside in exteriority, to hold oneself in and by it. But this exteriority is the lighting of being; it is the dimension of the ecstatic of ek-sistence, which is being itself (*das Sein als die Dimension des Ekstatischen der Ek-sistenz*). That exteriority is not space but what permits space to manifest itself. "The dimension is not something spatial in the familiar sense. Rather, everything spatial and all space-time occur essentially in the dimensionality (*im Dimensionalen*) which Being itself is" (*BW*, 213).

Now if ek-sistence holds itself in the exteriority of the ecstatic dimension of being and borrows its own phenomenality from that exteriority, how does that exteriority, which constitutes Dimensionality, which constitutes the truth of being, of its light and lighting—how does *it* arrive? For exteriority isn't simply there, like a stone or a tree or man, like the clearing in the forest. Exteriority exteriorizes itself. It exteriorizes itself in the transcendental process that throws out of itself and thus pro-jects what holds itself before as exteriority itself. All exteriority is *naturans-naturata*,¹⁶ *naturans* as pro-duction, as what throws before, *naturata* as what is thrown before as such, as the ob-jected. Only as *naturans-naturata* is exteriority constitutive of and identical to phenomenality.

All phenomenality as such, as actual, clears the way that leads to itself: the way to phenomena is phenomenon itself. Exteriority is the Open; the Open accomplishes the opening; that is, it opens and thus conducts to itself. Insofar as being lights up in the ecstatic Dimension of exteriority, wherein this Dimension constitutes the lighting of being, man is conducted by it to it; he opens himself to the Open, insofar as the Open opens itself to him; he ek-sists in it. To quote only one text, "'Being-in-the-world' designates the essence of ek-sistence with regard to the lighted dimension out of which the 'ek' of ek-sistence essentially unfolds."¹⁷

But the Open presupposes its preliminary Opening, not what accomplishes itself as opening itself for man, as self-constituting, as Phenomenon and Dimension of phenomenality in its phenomono-

logical actuality and as the lighting of being, the way that conducts to it and that it thus opens. The Open presupposes its preliminary Opening as Opening of the Open itself, not the opening that it makes possible but the opening that makes it possible, the transcendental process that throws before, that throws the Open itself, the *original* Exteriorization that exteriorizes exteriority and thus unfolds it as what it is and as the ecstatic Dimension of being, in order for it, thus unfolded and in that fashion, to be the lighting of being, that in which man can ek-sist. Man can ek-sist in the truth of being only on condition of a much more primary Ek-sistence, one that originally throws before itself, that has thrown the Open and constitutes the ecstatic Dimension.

Furthermore, the exteriority in which Exteriorization exteriorizes itself subsists and maintains itself in that condition that is its own, as the place of ecstatic phenomenality, only insofar as the process that produces it accomplishes itself, insofar as Exteriorization continually exteriorizes itself as what poses before itself, but that also relates to itself and retains what continually goes away, so that what goes away is not lost but is retained and maintained in the unity and coherence of the stable dimension of the Dimensional. The receptivity of the ecstatic horizon is the precondition without which that horizon, no longer being held or retained, could no longer be seen and no longer being seen, could no longer propose itself as a horizon of visibility and the possibility of all visibilization.

The fact that man now belongs to Heideggerian being, that he is thrown by being itself into the truth of being for "the preservation of its truth," "so that ek-sisting . . . he might guard the truth of Being," "as ek-sisting for guardianship over the truth of Being," "as the ek-sisting counter-throw of Being," "called by Being itself into the preservation of Being's truth," and finally as the shepherd of being, means that the truth of being does not light itself or subsist by virtue of itself. The exteriority constitutive of the Dimension does not phenomenalyze itself, except insofar as deployed in the transcendental process of Exteriorization that continually exteriorizes itself in that truth and thus holds it deployed, the truth is thus received by him, held and

maintained in the original act of its Exteriorization. The reception of the ecstatic horizon as the precondition of its phenomenological formation, receptivity as the transcendental precondition of the truth of being that lights itself in the lighting of exteriority, this is the primary process to which man lends his name, a process wherein the lighting of being is given its preliminary possibility. This is why Heideggerian being has need of man, why man does not arrive as a synthetic (and mysterious) addition to the already accomplished essence of the truth of being. For man cannot simply hold himself in the already opened truth of being if the guardianship of that truth, for which he is required, was, as a reception of the ecstatic horizon in which that horizon lights itself, really anything but the true transcendental condition of the possibility of that truth itself.

But how does man accomplish this guarding of being? Not as man, a being, but by his essence, as ek-sistence. Man comes to the truth of being by ek-sisting in it, insofar as that truth is the ecstatic Dimension of existence. But how does being itself come to its own truth, into the ecstatic Dimension, if not by ek-sisting in truth—in it, the ob-jected to which one comes by throwing oneself into it? Only ek-sistence can come into the truth of being as the preliminary work of being itself, not man's ek-sistence but ek-sistence as such, the transcendental process of Ek-stasis that throws before the ecstatic and comes into it through the act by which it throws it. Man is not the guardian of being. Man guards being only insofar as being first guards itself, insofar as it holds the Open in the throw by which it opens it. But man doesn't ek-sist afterward, throwing himself into the Open already opened by being. There is only one ek-sistence, the ek-sistence of Ek-stasis wherein the work of being is accomplished. Man himself doesn't ek-sist. Man ek-sists only on the basis of the process of being in him.

But how can man open himself to his own foundation, his own essence, and unite with the transcendental process that flashes through him so that being one with that process and what it does, he can throw himself with it into the Open and thus come to the lighting? Or rather, let us ask this question of being itself: How does this transcen-

dental process that throws the Open and thus holds it before itself come, first and in itself, into the process, into Ek-sistence, to be what it is and do what it does? For once again, man, as a being, cannot accomplish being's innermost possibility, namely, the Unity wherein being originally comes into itself. Or, if we suppose that this original Unity is nonetheless accomplished and its ultimate possibility made evident, how, then, can man, since he does not accomplish that Unity, unite with it in such a fashion as to enter through it into Ek-sistence and through Ek-sistence into the Open?

Or rather, isn't the coming of Ek-sistence into itself, as self-affection, as what originally affects itself, as identity of what affects and what is affected—isn't this the essence of ipseity and as such, that of man himself? For man is he who says "I." Man does not say "I" because he can speak. Man speaks because he says "I," and he says "I" on the basis in himself of the essence of ipseity. Having his essence in ipseity, man is born into being, comes into it, simultaneous with it, insofar as it comes. Man doesn't create being; he is created by it, in it, because originally self-affecting itself in the self-appearing of its coming to self and thus arriving, being is determined each time as an ego.

Thus, once again we may meditate upon the crucial intuitions of beginning Cartesianism, which, knowing nothing of man, and in its night, having nothing left to hold on to but the appearing of appearance (equal to being), says: *ego cogito, ego sum*. The Cartesian intelligence of the initiality of the beginning formulates itself by the identity of these three words: *ego, cogito, sum*. In accomplishing itself as "thought" (appearance), being also accomplishes itself as ipseity. Only in the identity of "thought" and ipseity did Descartes grasp the essence of the soul, that of an appearance whose self-appearing to itself is identically ipseity and life. In being's initial self-coming, man produces himself as living, as he who on the basis in him of primary ipseity, carried and constituted by it, can say "I": the *homo humanus* whose transcendental *humanitas* goes to the sources of being.

Also to be meditated upon is the fact that from this original connection of thought and ego, Descartes declared only that nothing more evident proposes itself as explanation for that connection. This

is undoubtedly because such a connection establishes itself at a time when self-evidence is not yet born, in its very pro-duction, at the heart of the transcendental process of exteriorization in which exteriority is pro-duced. Schelling says that such pro-duction, wherein there is neither exteriority nor self-evidence, is unconscious. It is the veiling from which all unveiling is produced. Such an "unconscious" must carefully be distinguished from the one belonging to the ek-static horizon. But this original unconscious is unconscious only for a philosophy that does not possess an adequate conception of phenomenality. Such a philosophy is a philosophy of the unconscious. It reduces phenomenality to the "world" and its "knowledge." It is contradictory in that, *naturans-naturata*, all exteriority phenomenalizes itself only if its *naturans* is effective. In the end, only a material phenomenology can accomplish the return to the initial dimension of the beginning, a phenomenology that leaving behind the formal concepts of phenomenality, using them only as indications, questions what makes them possible—the concrete phenomenological substantiality to which they refer. Only such a phenomenology brings "the essential help of phenomenological seeing." It alone decomposes the concept of appearance into its principal material dichotomy. The fact that this material phenomenology's thematic remained unthought by Descartes does not prevent its real accomplishment in the reduction, the departure in that reduction of the radical immanence of the *videor* in its structural ontological difference from ek-stasis. The amphibole of the totality of the key concepts of Cartesian phenomenology brings the proof of that departure.

Opposed to this amphibole is the striking monotony of the fundamental concepts of Heideggerian phenomenology. Being guards man so that man in turn can be the guardian of being. But whether this guardianship is being's throwing of man's existence into the truth of being or man's existence in that truth, a single Phenomenon constitutes the essence of that double guardianship and ensures its reversibility, a single space of light, traversed first in one direction, then in the other, relating it first to being and then to man. Being is related to man; it itself is that relation. "Being itself is the relation to the extent

that It . . . gathers to itself and embraces ek-sistence in its existential, that is, ecstatic, essence" (*BW*, 211). How does man in turn relate to being? What is the essence and possibility of that relation if not the essence and possibility of the relation by which being relates to him? The relation by which being carries man to itself is identical to the relation in which man carries himself to being. That relation is the one of being and thought, their original inherence in each other, the Co-appropriation of *Ereignis*.¹⁸ Therefore, if it is a matter of man and his essence, of he who becomes the subject of modern metaphysics, then it is necessary to say, "Man is never first and foremost man on the hither side of the world, as a 'subject.' . . . Rather, before all this, man in his essence is ek-sistent into the openness of Being" (*BW*, 229). What is most interior in that man and his *humanitas* is a radical exteriority. The "subjectivity" of that "subject" is that of the "world," is what is "more 'Objective' than any possible 'Object'" (*Being and Time*, 418).

Because man's phenomenological essence is exteriority, the essence of being, because there is only one essence of phenomenality and a single accomplishment of that essence, a single light, the concepts that formulate it are univocal. Whatever roots they are constructed on—those of shelter and concealment (*Bergen, Verborgenheit, Unverborgenheit*), joining (*Fuge*), belonging (*Zugehörigkeit*), happening (*Geschichte, Geschehen*), coming (*kommen, vor-kommen*), destiny (*Geschick*), lighting (*Licht, Lichtung*), the gaze (*Blick, Anblick*), openness (*offen, Offenheit, Offenbarung, Offenbarkeit, Erschliessung, Erschlossenheit*), seeing (*Sehen, aus-sehen, Gesicht, Ansicht*), being and there (*Da-sein*), positing and station (*Setzen, Stehen, hinaus-stehen, Stand, Bestand, Gegenstand, stellen, her-stellen, vor-stellen, zu-stellen*), truth and guardianship (*Wahr, wahren, Gewahren*), reigning, world, throwness, essence (*Walten, Welt, werfen, wesen*), relation (*Verhältniss*), dwelling (*Aufenthalt*), and the House (*Haus*)—these metaphors of thought all have the same phenomenological reference.

Such monotony makes the method possible—what Marx (against Stirner) had already called the method of "appositions," those imperceptible slidings of meaning that by gradually moving from one

concept, easily approach another. From ethics to ontology there is only one step once it is noted that "'*êthos*' means 'abode,'" that is, "the open region for the presencing of god" (BW, 233, 234) (which itself designates that presence), and that *nomos* "is not only law but more originally the assignment contained in the dispensation of Being," an assignment (*Zuweisung*) that alone "is capable of enjoining (*verfügen*) man to Being" (BW, 238; translation modified), both of which in the final analysis have their essence in that "injunction."

The univocality of this discourse is revealed to be equivocal in the highest degree if the appearance to which it refers can be structurally divided according to the phenomenological materiality of its effectuation into two incompatible modes of accomplishment. For the "opening" in the lighting of being cannot indistinctly designate ek-sistence *and* the more original Unity wherein ek-sistence comes into itself. Additionally, that Unity is more than a means for coming into the light; in it is essentialized the lightless dimension wherein nothing ek-sists, wherein everything reposes in itself in the immanence of life. The question of the insertion of the *ego cogito* into "the history of Western metaphysics" can be posed only as a function of that essential dichotomy.

Once the *ego cogito* is arbitrarily reduced to an "I represent," that insertion occurs without opposition. The phenomenality from which representation borrows its possibility can be only that of ek-stasis (there is no other); representation is only an improper way of thinking of ek-sistence. What is this improper way of thinking? What alteration does the Cartesian cogito impose on Platonic truth and, beyond, on Greek truth? It gives man the initiative in the deployment of the relation. It is the ego that re-presents, that throws before itself and brings the horizon of representability back to itself. Thus everything is defined as if it could represent itself. But whether the initiative comes back to being or to man in the throw of ek-sistence, the phenomenality that it pro-jects or by which it is thrown is the same. It is the light of ek-stasis.

Heidegger did his best to oppose radically Cartesian truth to

Greek truth. That opposition is the opposition of the *Gegenstand* and the *Gegenüber*, of the "object" and the "opposite."

In the object (*Gegenstand*) the ob- (*Gegen*) defines itself as the representative throwing-against of the subject. In the 'opposite' (*Gegenüber*) the *Gegen* (op-) reveals itself as what comes down to the perceiving, gazing-hearing man, as what comes-over him. . . . Consequently, what is present is not what a subject throws to himself in the way of object, but rather what comes to the perceiving and what the human gaze and hearing put down and over (*hin- und dar-stellt*) as coming-over them.¹⁹

Because modern man believes himself the master of the object that he objects into an "against" that comes to him, his attitude differs completely from the listening of the Greek in regard to a presence that doesn't emanate from him and which is as such "the presence of the gods," so that for him it is "the most uncanny and bewitching opposite: *to deinon*."

More crucial, however, than the attitude of the Greeks or the moderns in regard to what arrives is the structure of that coming, the essence of the truth of being. As long as that essence remains thought with the help of a *Gegen*, which fundamentally determines the *Gegenüber* as well as the *Gegenstand*, the difference that separates them is secondary: the terms that proceed from that difference carry the Same in themselves. "The Same": the lighting that holds itself in the opening of the open by way of the *Gegen*, which thus constitutes the *Be-gegen* (encounter) and since it comes from the gods and not men, the Greek "opposite" too "lies-before."²⁰

Reduced to the "I represent," the cogito not only inserts itself into Western metaphysics; it is at one with what precedes it, with the most original truth of the *physis*, insofar as it too is constituted by the *Gegen*. The proof is the extraordinary fact that the history of Western metaphysics is the history of "being" itself. It is the same being, the same truth, that at one point dispatches itself to us as *physis*, at another as *idea*, and at still another as *cogito*. The identity of the essence of appearance founds the secret affinity between diverse epochs of being, between *Gegenüber* and *Gegenstand*. It is true that

these epoches aren't equivalent. The way being veils and unveils itself in each is unique to it. Nonetheless, that veiling and that unveiling, and particularly the nature of the latter, belong to all epoches and determine them all equally.

In modern times, those begun by the cogito, the clouding of the truth of being is nonetheless pushed to its extreme when man, making himself subject, takes himself to be being. However, man's mistake in taking himself for being proceeds not from man himself but from being. It is only the way being dispatches itself in modern times. Why does being play this little trick on itself, making itself appear as man in the eyes of men—that is, in the end, in its own eyes?

Because man is only a figurehead for the transcendental precondition of being itself, interpreted on the basis of the *Gegen*. The history of being is therefore not as absurd as it appears; it is not delivered over to chance. In it, essence unrolls its prescriptions one after another. That is why man doesn't intervene in it (even in Greece) solely as the receptivity and plan of ek-stasis but more ultimately as ego. Not the *ego* that represents but the ipseity that, presupposed in every representation, excludes them all insurmountably.

But this "ego" doesn't insert itself into the history of Western metaphysics, not any more than into that of being. It doesn't arrive in Descartes's epoch, nor in the times that it inaugurates. It is not a declension of ek-stasis. It is there before ek-stasis, before Difference. It is the beginning that begins at the beginning and never stops beginning, appearance's initial self-appearing, the invisible coming of life into itself.

4

Empty Subjectivity and Life Lost: Kant's Critique of "Soul"

The ego's ipseity does not reside in, nor can it be founded on, the essence of representivity, as this examination of Kant's critique of the paralogisms of rational psychology will demonstrate. Kantian metaphysics is a metaphysics of representivity—representivity as the precondition of everything that is, and therefore as the essence of being. How can anything *be* for us? By being represented by us. We know only phenomena, Kant says, and critical thought takes its legitimation from that phenomenological presupposition. But "knowledge" and "phenomenon" mean nothing but "coming to the condition of being-represented," "being-there-before," and thus "self-showing" or simply "being." When thought speaks of object-knowledge, it first opposes knowledge and object so that it can then ask about the possibility of their relationship, the possibility of knowledge reaching toward and attaining the object. Knowledge and object, however, are identical—if to be an object is to be represented and if to be represented is to be known. Representivity is the essence common to knowledge and object as the essence common to phenomena and being. *The Critique of Pure Reason* attempts the radical elucidation of that essence; it is a systematic search for the conditions in which pure

being-represented is accomplished, a search for the transcendental conditions of the possibility of experience as the possibility of objects of experience.

The first of these conditions is intuition.¹ "In whatever manner and by whatever means a mode of knowledge may relate to objects, *intuition* is that through which it is in immediate relation to them, and to which all thought as a means is directed" (A 19, B 33).² In this passage from the famous opening lines of the "Transcendental Aesthetic" it seems evident that intuition takes precedence over thought, whose sole function is to make private objects of intuition accessible to others and thus to "represent" them in a concept. But it then appears that intuition's most profound essence is inner sense, which is called the "limiting condition" (B 159) of an understanding like ours. Our understanding can represent only objects that are given in intuition. It is opposed to divine or intuitive understanding, whose representations would produce its objects. Thus, intuition is placed at the heart of experience only to be immediately recognized as finite in comparison to true understanding. For the finitude of our understanding, which "can only *think*, and for intuition must look to the senses" (B 135), is based on the finitude of intuition itself as knowledge's fundamental power, incapable of creating its objects and thus constrained to receive them.

But how does intuition receive its objects? For intuition's receptivity, which makes it finite, cannot be defined merely externally, in antithetical reference to the limit concept of an *intuitus originarius*. It must be grasped in its inner, phenomenological positivity if it really designates nothing but phenomenality as such, if the intuition or reception of intuition's objects necessarily implies their self-showing, their being phenomena. But intuition's receptive capacity, that is, the object's capacity to show itself, consists of the institution of a relationship through which what is to be received and intuited finds itself placed, precisely, in the condition of object, posed before and thus seen, intuited, known. From the outset, the "Transcendental Aesthetic" 's liminary declaration affirms that all knowledge whatsoever consists of the *relationship to objects*, and intuition is the condi-

tion of all possible knowledge only through being their "immediate" realization.

This intuition, which immediately distances and thus "objects" what it then receives as ob-ject, is the pure intuition presupposed by every empirical intuition. For the intuition of any being is possible only through its preliminary distancing. There are not two intuitions—one pure, the other empirical; one ontological, the other ontic—but only one essence of intuition: original distancing. Space and time are "pure intuitions," but only because they contain the original transcendence that establishes the ecstatic horizon in which each being is received and made visible as an object. Space and time are really only modes of that transcendence, and if even outer intuitions are internal, if time includes space, it is because time's constitution of the structure of inner sense is only the projection of objectivity's primordial horizon, forming the a priori dimension of all possible experience as experience of an object—the essence of representivity.

But thought itself is representation. More precisely, it is representation's unity since it is based on intuition ("representation which can be given prior to all thought is entitled intuition"; B 132). For the ecstatic transcendence inhabiting the original intuitions of space and time, which create the pure ontological content they receive, and through this reception beings in turn are received as ob-jected—ekstasis, in short, which originally creates the pure manifold of space and time—is possible only if it accomplishes the synthesis of that manifold and holds it in the unity of its vision. Thought is precisely the a priori synthetic unity of intuition's manifold and is demanded by it. For if it is not to become lost or disappear in the dispersion of the manifold, every intuition presupposes a binding power that makes it *one* intuition; that is, *one* consciousness. Hence, the analytic unity of consciousness, without which nothing would exist, is based on the synthetic unity of apperception. The categories are nothing but the different ways thought accomplishes the synthesis of the manifold by constantly referring to its unity.

The question of which is primary, thought or intuition, in the

composition of knowledge's transcendental power appears illusory if the first joins itself to the second in order to constitute that power, if the synthesis of the manifold simultaneously presupposes and makes possible that power. Does a synopsis already belong to intuition? Or isn't the most original synopsis the power on which intuition itself is based—the ek-stasis of exteriority, the origin of every manifold? In any case, such an ek-stasis inhabits thought itself. It is the essence common to both thought and intuition, the foundation of their unity. The problem of the unity of knowledge's transcendental power is not originally that of the unity of intuition and thought; rather, it concerns what in each of them ultimately assures the unity that they bring into play—the unity of ek-stasis as such. It is this inner coherence of the transcendental process of exteriority's exteriorization that Kant struggles to recognize and provide with a foundation. He does so because in his mind such a process constitutes the condition of all possible experience as a relation to any object whatsoever. For this reason, Kantianism is a metaphysics of representivity because ek-stasis is the essence of representation, making possible all coming into being as a coming into phenomena, a coming into the condition of Object.

The significance of Kant's critique is ambiguous. First, at the heart of a philosophical vision without peer, it tries to think the transcendental condition of all possible experience, recognized as representivity's essence. If, however, such a transcendental condition of all possible experience is also that of all possible being for us and consequently delimits an ontology, it quickly becomes evident that it is a self-destructive non-ontology. Pure thought and intuition compose the ecstatic structure of the being of which they are the analysis. But that structure of being still does not, in itself, contain any being. The condition of all existence doesn't contain any existence, nor can it produce any. Existence comes from an element radically incompatible with it—sensation. Thus, right from the start, we discover the second aspect of the *Critique*, its truly abyssal intuition: the essence that originally carries existence, the inaugural power of being, is not ek-stasis, nor does it reside there.

This second aspect is the *Critique's* true significance. Though its

major analyses struggle to found the coherence of representation, especially the inner determination of pure intuition by the concepts of understanding, such a determination remains null since it determines nothing until it receives its wholly other: sensation or impression—*Empfindung*. The critique of knowledge does not simply exhibit representivity as knowledge's (and thus every possible object's) a priori condition of possibility. *It is the critique of that transcendental condition and thus of representivity itself.* Representivity is constantly shown to be incapable of arriving at actual experience or exhibiting reality since it is merely an empty form. The determinations of representivity as (empty) form and reality as foreign to it are made conjointly and antithetically in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Reality is given only to sensation: "sensation," Kant says, "indicates a reality." On the contrary, pure representation—space, for example ("space is itself nothing but mere representation")—is incapable of exhibiting such a reality in and by itself: "Nothing in it can count as real save only what is represented . . . by perception" (A 374). And perception is based on and refers to sensation. Generally, the second postulate of empirical thought in relation to knowledge of "reality . . . demands perception, hence sensation, of which we are conscious" (A 225, B 272; my emphasis).³ Thus sensation really plays the role of origin; it is being itself, reality. It is the foundation of existence, and it alone makes experience, as actual, concrete experience, possible. It is always the empirical experience of an existence that is itself empirical.

This is the crux of Kantian thought and its aporia. And insofar as Kantianism is nothing but the ultimate avatar of representivity's metaphysics, representivity itself is called into question and will hand over its ultimate truth at the very moment it intends to seal it up forever. The fact that sensation is representation's other and that representation is incapable of production means that the *being* of sensation, the being of impression, is not, nor can it be, reduced to representivity as such. *What, then, is the being of impression as irreducible to representivity if not the original self-impression in which every impression impresses itself and is thus possible as what it is, if not life's radically immanent essence, exclusive of all ek-stasis?*

Kant, however, takes impression to be ek-stasis's wholly other

only to return it immediately to ek-stasis since *sensation as such is intuited*, received by inner sense whose structure, identical to the structure of time, is the structure of ek-stasis as such. With the reduction of impression's being to representivity, the transcendental element inherent in sensation (i.e., affectivity as the a priori condition of possibility, as revelation's original essence without which no impression or sensation would ever be) is completely ignored and replaced by representivity, by the transcendental condition of experience as the experience of objects of experience. Because Kant makes this the condition of all possible experience, he not only fails to recognize the possibility of the experience of sensation as the experience that impression has of itself but also makes impression and the pure affective element that serves as its support a dead, opaque, blind content, deprived of the light of phenomenality, which is forced to beg it from a power other than itself: representation.

In short, sensation is impossible in representation.⁴ That is why Kant is constantly obliged to *add sensation to representation*. But because he lacks appropriate radical ontological means, Kant is forced to add sensation *in* representation, as *representation's representation*, as the ontic content of that unique ontological power, representivity as such. But a unique and exclusive ontological power is precisely what representivity is *not*. Instead, it is characterized by a fundamental inadequacy, its inability to exhibit in itself what originally escapes the exteriority it projects. And yet this escapee constitutes the real, absolutely essential condition of any actual experience: sensation, life.

Kant's conditions of all real experience can now be understood. Experience occurs only in representivity because the powers of ek-stasis have thrown *out* transcendental exteriority's pure manifold, and this original advent of an outside creates a pure ontological center of visibility in which there is nothing to see. Precisely because time's pure intuition is, according to Kant's explicit statement, merely an "empty intuition,"⁵ it cannot be an object of perception, and the self-knowledge of inner sense, whose form is time, receives no positive contribution from that form. As pure intuition, space is in no position to supplement time. If empirical self-knowledge is possible only

when supported by space, it is not because space, as pure representation, is any less empty than time. It is only because space presents its content in a way that allows for application of the categories, notably those of substance and causality. But then that content is no longer purely ontological; it is empirical. In each case, intuition is merely the mode of knowledge's accomplishment. This knowledge, however, is realized only under the condition of sensation. Here, already, the reciprocal conditioning of pure and empirical intuition is reversed: the latter is no longer conditioned by the former. Now empirical intuition renders pure intuition actual and secretly founds it. But the *Critique's* ultimate truth—that all actual knowledge is finally based on and presupposes sensation—remains masked because sensation is reduced to empirical intuition and thus appears dependent on it and its foundation: representation.

Sensation necessarily belongs to real, actual experience as the goal toward which the transcendental power of knowledge is merely a means. This can be demonstrated by examining pure thought, which with intuition constitutes that transcendental power. Thought is the a priori unity of apperception, which through the action of its categories accomplishes the synthesis of the manifold. But as Kant says, "It is a very noteworthy fact that the possibility of a thing cannot be determined from the category alone, and that in order to exhibit the objective reality of the pure concept of understanding we must always have an intuition" (translation modified). And that is because "the categories are not in themselves knowledge, but are merely *forms of thought* for the making of knowledge from given intuitions." That such given intuitions are empirical is shown by what follows in the "General Note" on the "System of the Principles"—for example, in relation to the principle of causality, which we were able to prove "only of objects of possible experience; and even so, not from pure concepts, but only as a principle of the possibility of experience, and therefore of the knowledge of an object given in *empirical intuition*" (B, 288–89; Kant's emphasis). More generally, this is shown by the essential and much-repeated thesis that the categories can be applied only empirically.

This insurmountable prescription of the *Critique*, which forbids us to take "a step beyond the world of sense" (B 409), is expressed again in the thesis that all knowledge is synthetic. At this point, *synthetic* no longer means thought itself, as the essential binding of the manifold, but the fact that thought, reduced to pure intuition's a priori synthesis, produces no knowledge without sensation, which is dejected into the ek-stasis of space and time and reunified in, but independent of, thought. A knowledge proposition is a synthetic proposition, one that joins an otherwise empty subject to a predicate that is always based on empirical intuition and therefore on sensation. That is why Kant says, "No synthetic proposition can be made from mere categories" and "No one . . . has ever yet succeeded in proving a synthetic proposition merely from pure concepts of the understanding" (B 289).

The concept's inability to furnish the content and permit the development of actual knowledge and its progression plays a crucial role in the critique of the paralogisms of rational psychology. As its own tautological repetition, incapable of proving that anything real corresponds to it, the concept is only a question whose response must come from an element of another order. "The concept," says Kant, "revolves perpetually in a circle, and does not help us in respect to any question which aims at synthetic knowledge" (A 366), and that is because, as he later repeats, "a synthetic solution always requires intuition" (A 398; translation modified).

But the concept's poverty is still greater; it does not arise solely from the fact that reduced to itself, the concept, as the analytic doubling of a logical principle, cannot transform itself into the concept of a reality, *the concept of an object*. More profoundly, that poverty designates the concept's original inability to become self-knowledge. For self-knowledge is precisely not knowledge. It exhibits no reality, *least of all the concept's own*, nor can it lead to grasping that reality. It is merely an empty, formal consciousness whose status remains undetermined and whose affirmation is baseless.

But the concept's ontological poverty, incapable of exhibiting any reality, especially its own, is not unique to the concept. It involves

knowledge's transcendental power in general and consequently intuition itself as pure intuition. Ecstatic structure as such, representivity's essence, is foreign to reality and rather than supplying it, is fundamentally deprived of it. That is why the condition said to be that of all possible experience is forced to seek what it lacks outside itself; that is why it becomes intuition, a receptive and thus finite intuition. Intuition's finitude is not unique to itself, nor is it some inexplicable human fate. It derives from an earlier unthought presupposition, which strikes at the heart of Kantianism and every philosophy of representation. *That presupposition is the reduction of absolute subjectivity's essence to representation. Since subjectivity has no reality in itself, since it does not experience itself as itself nor give itself to itself as what it is and is therefore not alive, not life, and therefore lacks the ontological element of reality, it must seek that element outside itself.* Thus exteriority's ecstatic deployment, following representation's fundamental modes (pure intuition and concept), is merely the way a subjectivity that is *not* subjectivity, that is *not* being, reaches beyond itself in and through its representation.

But this exteriority too is not being. When it exhibits itself outside the phenomenological horizon it constitutes, all it exhibits is the emptiness of that horizon. It is still nothing. According to Kant himself, knowledge's transcendental power is incapable of founding actual knowledge; that is, it is incapable of positing reality. So what is this reality that cannot be posed by ek-stasis? Once again, it is sensation. But we have also seen that sensation is possible only as self-impression based on original subjectivity's essence as life. *What Kantian subjectivity seeks outside itself is nothing but its own essence*, the essence of life. According to the *Critique*, knowledge's transcendental power, reduced to an empty form, must join empirical and contingent beings to arrive at synthetic knowledge. The true a priori is hidden in these very beings. That is why this contingent element is necessary to authentic experience, which presupposes and is possible only as a mode of life.

The critique of rational psychology's paralogisms makes it clear that ek-stasis, emptied of reality's ontological element and thus con-

strained to seek it outside itself, attempts to rejoin it as empirical manifold by way of empirical intuition. Rational psychology is a science of the soul, of the ego or more precisely, its essence, the essence of ipseity as subjectivity's original essence, which in Kantianism became the transcendental condition of possibility of experiential objects, ek-stasis itself. However, rational psychology is a pure a priori science that claims to arrive at real knowledge of the soul (of subjectivity, of "thought") basing its claims solely on thought, on subjectivity abstracted from all empirical predicates, which could only mar its purity. Such an a priori science of subjectivity, founded solely on subjectivity, is possible only if subjectivity's essence consists of self-revelation. If, however, subjectivity is reduced to ek-stasis—that is, if phenomenality is that of exteriority—all knowledge and science, especially self-knowledge, take their possibility from that exteriority. Thus, Kant's critique of rational psychology's paralogism unfolds its prescriptions before us.

Rational psychology is a pure science of the soul based solely on thought. But knowledge without empirical predicates is not synthetic. It can display only transcendental predicates, which are empty. Examine these predicates: substantiality, simplicity, identity, distinct existence. These are admittedly predicates of thought. But since Kant's "thought" is not an actual subjectivity founded on the phenomenon of its own essence, it is nothing but the problematic formal unity of a possible knowledge (which would be real only if empirical intuition was given). Transcendental predicates are nothing but predicates of that problematic formal unity, its redoubling and purely analytic explanation. Since they are as problematic and possible as that unity, they do not in any way constitute real predicates of real being, of self.⁶ Thus rational psychology cannot define real self-knowledge since it could do so only with the help of empirical predicates based on empirical intuition, which it claims to do without.

Knowledge's transcendental power, however, is deficient not only in intuition but also in concepts since it has no real self-concept. First, a real concept is more than a category. It is an object-concept that determines an intuition, and rational psychology, according to

its own hypotheses, lacks intuition. Furthermore, that object-concept would have to be a self-concept. But even if knowledge's transcendental condition might be called a concept in the largest sense, as the concept of an object in general, it is in no way a self-concept, especially not a concept of *my* self. Consciousness, says Kant, is not "a representation distinguishing a particular object" (A 346, B 404). In itself, therefore, it does not allow me to discern my own being in its specificity because it doesn't furnish me with the particular concept of that particular object that I call self. So there is no self-concept or intuition based solely on thought (on subjectivity) as defined by Kant (i.e., as the logical condition of representation). Therefore, rational psychology lacks every condition required by Kant's ontology to produce any knowledge whatsoever (i.e., an actual phenomenon).

Nevertheless, the failure of rational psychology gives rise to the following question: How can we determine the being of our self, or ego, how can we know it, if pure thought is not sufficient? More important, how do we even get the idea of a self (i.e., of the being that we are) if it is true that each of us expresses our subjectivity only by continually repeating "I" or "me"? The theory of inner experience furnishes the answer to that question. It consists of the simple re-affirmation of Kantian ontology's habitual presuppositions: inner experience produces self-being by submitting it to the conditions of experience in general. Consequently, that answer is achieved by the intuitive determination of a concept that ends in knowledge of the empirical self. So in order *to be*, the self must first be received in intuition: initially a specific empirical element or impression is furnished, which, intuited in inner sense (i.e., in and by time), is then submitted to the categories, which assign it (as well as every other empirical datum) a definite place in the universal system, thus making it a "phenomenon" (i.e., an object of knowledge).

It is precisely the necessity of submitting this impression to the categories that leads Kant to reject psychological idealism. The categories, or more precisely, the categories of substance and causality, can be applied only to a permanent object, which inner sense cannot exhibit since it is nothing but the temporal form in which everything

flows and nothing stays put. Only outer intuition can furnish an object subsumable under the categories, which require the existence of permanence. Inner life—that is, the subjective succession of inner sense impressions—can be constituted by the organizing force of the categories (i.e., can be thought and known) only if the subject of knowledge shores it up with an objective universe and the permanent order of objects in space.

Accounting for this refutation of the problematic idealism is a considerable annoyance to the truly philosophical understanding of Kant's theory of self. So the fundamental problems concerning the ultimate interpretation of being are generally ignored. Interest is displaced toward a relatively secondary question—whether an autonomous subjective series exists and whether inner experience (i.e., empirical self-knowledge in time) stands behind the determination of an outer objective order. It is true that in posing such a question, people pretend to wonder whether there are *two types of experience* or that duality is merely apparent and actually belongs solely to the experience of real phenomena (i.e., those determined by the categories). They do not notice that even though Kant may have admitted the existence of an autonomous subjective series, the modalities that compose it, since they are received in inner sense whose form is time (i.e., the original form of ek-stasis), remain submitted to that structure and are therefore representations, as Kant constantly calls them. Thus, self-being is reduced to representations and the object that is their totality, whereas nothing is more repulsive to the essence of ipseity and its inner possibility than being-represented. This uncovers the aporia that every metaphysics of representation runs into whenever it tries to determine the being of a self, as will be shown by a radical critique of Kant's "inner experience."

In ek-stasis, which founds representation (inner sense in this case), we have access to exteriority as such, the ontological element of a pure alterity. According to Kant's explicit declaration, sensation always designates affection by a foreign being. This is especially true of inner sense, which is a sense only because it is conditioned by time ek-stasis, the condition of all natural sense. Only on that condition can we

relate to any being, which is therefore necessarily foreign to us. The paralogism subtly included in Kant's theory of "inner sense" consists of that very name. Nothing warrants calling it "inner" since its essence makes it the sense of exteriority, thus "outer," and nothing more. To separate outer sense from what he calls inner sense, Kant admittedly has at his disposal the purely intuitive (i.e., phenomenological) properties that differentiate time and space. But time's pure intuitive content differing from space's does not necessarily make that content or the sense that exhibits it "inner." Better to think that space's exteriority is based on the exteriority already deployed in "inner sense" by time ek-stasis. Thus space itself is *in* time and, as Heidegger says, "in the world." But this ineluctable ontological situation is masked by the presupposition that the pure content produced in inner sense's time ek-stasis refers and belongs to a self. This presupposition, however, is completely unfounded in Kant and furthermore absurd if ipseity is possible only through an affection whose content (i.e., the "affecter") is *identical* and not exterior to the "affected"; in other words, if the ego is necessarily unintuitable. Besides, why would intuitive power (knowledge's transcendental power) think that its external intuition is a self, especially its own self? Why would it look for itself in that exteriority where all is exterior? And finally, how could it recognize itself there if it did not already possess it in itself, as that Self that lives in it and that it itself is—*thus, prior to ek-stasis, prior to and independent of intuition?*

Kant nevertheless stubbornly insists that intuition intervene to determine self-being. The theory of inner experience looks for that intuition in "inner" sense impressions, whereas the paralogism of rational psychology consists of doing without it. We must now clarify the philosophical motivation behind that insistence on intuition in the case of self-knowledge. We must also see why the Kantian problematic becomes so lost that instead of regarding the intuitive manifold as necessarily lacking the makings of Self's ipseity, it sees that manifold, on the contrary, as the indispensable precondition of the experience and existence of self. In my view, the reason for this is the tacit recognition of the passivity inherent to and constituent of ip-

seity's essence. Thought, according to Kant, is purely spontaneous. It cannot contain self-being because no self is self-posing. Instead, self-being must be received and thus given in receptive intuition. Therefore, in Kant's deepest view, the self does not produce itself. It must acquire its self-concept empirically, not a priori.⁷ But because the *Critique's* author knows no mode of receptivity other than intuition (i.e., ek-stasis), what must be received pro-poses itself in exteriority as the other and so cannot be self-being. This will now be demonstrated in a critical examination of *inner sense material*.

In fact, what must be received and supply self-being is no longer exteriority, which is only a pure alterity, merely a secondary receptivity compared to thought (since it is produced by knowledge's transcendental power, by time, in this case, which is an originary intuition, creating its own content). Rather, exteriority is merely the medium through which the supposed bearer of self-being (i.e., of inner sense impression) must be received, and the latter must be received because it has been distanced by that original exteriority—in Kant's terms, because it is intuited in inner sense. But can inner sense material exhibit self-being?

First, it is not easy to determine what this material is. Since inner sense is merely the pure form of temporal intuition (ek-stasis), it does not seem to have any material of its own. Only by designating spirit's mode of apprehending *outer* intuition's manifold can inner sense receive the transcendental significance that the schematism accords it and that allows pure time, deprived of any irreducible intuitive property, to submit to the categories and serve them as mediation. But as we have seen, there is no self-concept that solely by subsuming an arbitrarily given manifold could make up the self-object's specific material. On the contrary, it is up to intuition's manifold to specify the object of knowledge. Because there is no self-object concept independent of intuition, intuition gets the job of founding that concept, which becomes a true self-concept only by determining a *specific* intuition. It is up to inner sense to furnish a nonarbitrary manifold.

And that is the very thing it cannot do. Since inner sense material (i.e., its impressions) is really received in and through the original

exteriority of ek-stasis, it is merely something impressional, intuitive, sensible but transcendent, comparable in every way to external sensible intuitions, and it cannot be differentiated from them to refer them to a self rather than to some arbitrary object. This is the ineluctable destiny of every ecstatic ontology that *recognizes impressions as phenomena only in intuition*: to be immediately deprived of impression's inner essence, as self-impression and ipseity, and simultaneously to be deprived of the original bond that on the basis of its essence unites that impression to a "self."

In a vain unconscious attempt to overcome this ultimate difficulty, an effort is made, beginning with the *Critique's* second edition, to found the specificity of inner sense's manifold. This effort is made precisely by attaching that manifold to the self whose knowledge it was supposed to make possible. Indeed, such a manifold ceases to be arbitrary if it contains certain impressions that belong to that sense's determination, not through the external object but through the acts of the understanding that pursues its knowledge and thus through the "I" that belongs to them. In other words, knowledge's transcendental power performs the synthesis of outer intuition's manifold by applying its categories and constructing the object of perception. But while it is occupied with the outer object, constituting and determining it, each transcendental act of determination affects the inner sense interiorly, producing a shock that appears to be the backlash of its use and that is nothing but inner sense impression or sensation. Thus, it is no longer an arbitrary sensation, like those that spirit attaches to outer things. Because it originates in the universe-constructing self, it is bound to the self as its result and thus proposes itself as inner sense's specific manifold whose specificity consists precisely of its inner self-relation.

With the specific sensation of inner sense Kant has the two conditions required by his theory of knowledge, or rather, self-existence. In the first place, he has the empirical element: indeed, the existence of the self, as of all existence, presupposes sensation. A priori representations themselves acquire existence only by belonging to inner sense, by being modifications of spirit. Kant does not confuse knowledge's

transcendental power and inner sense, far from it, but through that fundamental distinction, he deliberately places self-feeling or existence in the camp of inner sense, or rather he interprets them as its modes, as repercussions in it of an originary act of knowledge's power. In other words, thinking that he was following Descartes in this, Kant radically dissociates the "I think" and the "I am." The passage from the first to the second is admittedly not a reasoning. It is the act by which spirit affects itself insofar as, determining outer affections, it simultaneously produces in inner sense an impression that is the empirical trace of that pure determining act. Self-existence, the "I am," is that empirical impression, which immediately redoubles pure thought's "I think." In a famous note to the second edition, Kant calls it an "indeterminate empirical intuition" (B 422). This must be understood to mean that it is not yet submitted to the categories. "Existence," the note adds, "is not a category." Thus we find ourselves in the presence of a particularly remarkable illustration of what we have recognized as an insurmountable limit to the ecstatic definition of being and existence: the necessity of seeking existence outside pure representations of thought or intuition, precisely in sensation—in short, to pose existence independent of the category of existence. That such an anomaly shows up in regard to existence is admittedly not indifferent. But as we have seen, in Kant's ontology, despite its ecstatic presuppositions, existence in general is eliminated from the general conditions of experience, of existence.

That self-knowledge, after that, is constituted and achieved only with the categorial determination of the originally indeterminate empirical intuition does not change anything in that initial and fundamental situation but rather invites us to return to it. For inner sense impression founds self-existence, which then serves as a basis for self-knowledge only if, besides existence, it also contains a self, and that is the second condition required by Kant's theory of inner experience. Isn't such a condition filled if the impression in question expresses the immediate (and thus categorially undetermined) repercussion of the transcendental act of the "I think," and thus the existence of that "I," in inner sense?

But impression belongs to and comes from a self only if that self's

ipseity has been established at the point of its original deployment of essence (i.e., in knowledge's transcendental power) as the "I" of "I think"; in other words, only if transcendental Self-existence has already been recognized and founded. But the critique of rational psychology's paralogism consists of repeating that self-existence cannot be deduced from pure thought, so that the "I" of "I think" can according to the first edition be grasped only problematically. Therefore, Kant's critique claims both that the self of pure thought exists only as an inner sense impression and that inner sense is self-existence only insofar as it comes from that self of pure thought—which does not exist or exists only in that impression.

Furthermore, it is not enough to affirm that inner sense impression is produced by the transcendental subject who constructs knowledge. If it is not to remain a simple, uninteresting speculative hypothesis, that impression's origin, which determines it in relation to a self, must be exhibited in its phenomenological actuality, an exhibition of the transcendental subject itself, since it affects inner sense. Such an affection is nothing but subjectivity's essence as self-affection and original self-constitution by self-affection. But this affection is not merely phenomenological. It is phenomenality's cause and first actualization, appearance's self-appearing and thus its original possibility. Nor is it any longer bound to an outer self whose mysterious trace or reflection it bears since it is ipseity itself and its inner genesis. Furthermore, subjectivity's constitutive self-affection is not only the affector (the transcendental self) but also the affected (inner sense) since it founds the possibility of being affected in general. And it founds that possibility because it is first affected by its own reality, because as self-affection and subjectivity, as self-impression and essence of all possible impression, it is capable of being impressed and affected by a thing in general, by the world. Inner sense does not receive impressions coming originally from elsewhere. It is the site where they form and thus "present themselves to it," and that is because for everything that affects it ek-statically, it has already affected itself in the affectivity of its own essence. And that is the real reason why it is an inner sense.

But for Kant inner sense is the ek-stasis of time in which affector

and affected are indifferent, exterior to each other, separated by exteriority, the exteriority that constitutes affection itself—phenomenality. The conditions of self-affection that secretly define inner sense do not exist in inner sense as understood by Kant. One could no doubt say that this sense produces the content of its affection and thus “affects itself.” But as ek-stasis, it first produces exteriority as its affection’s pure content, and it is affected by that exteriority rather than its own reality, the reality and possibility of being-affected.⁸ The fact that the Same both affects and is affected is still merely a tautological redoubling of that Same, not its inner essence as the essence of ipseity.

One crucial condition, which Kant himself demanded, of the self’s existence must here be recalled: what inner sense must receive to contain that existence is precisely not an empty exteriority; it is sensation. But the condition of an impression’s receptivity, in contrast to exteriority’s, is not ek-stasis. It is self-impression, constitutive of both that impression’s essence and its reception. Now, according to the critical problematic’s brusque mutation, deliberately breaking with representative ontology’s presuppositions, this impression contains and defines existence and reality. That inner sense impression defines existence and reality’s original dimension, and that (more important) that existence is a self-existence, according to Kantianism’s second express revindication, arises precisely from the fact that as self-impression, it conjointly defines subjectivity and ipseity’s original essence as being and life.

But the impression received in Kantian inner sense, intuited in time ek-stasis, is now merely a representative sensation covering the surface of and belonging to things, an external empirical intuition like all others (recall the *Critique*’s problem in separating the contents of the two senses), something impressional, sensible, and affective, which is like the world’s *humus*, the mysterious outside of an inside that never shows itself as it is in itself. Representative sensation is precisely nothing but the original impression’s representation in whose exteriority absolute subjectivity’s properties (reality, existence, affectivity, ipseity, and life) become unreal. And that is why Kant

could not discover the self’s existence where he insisted on looking for it—in inner sense’s transcendent content.

If intuition’s content, sensation as belonging to sensibility,⁹ shows itself to be definitively blind and incapable of exhibiting the self’s ipseity, it remains to seek that ipseity in knowledge’s transcendental power, the “I” of “I think.” And that is what Kant is constrained to do, returning despite himself to the theory of rational psychology that he claimed to be rid of, but not completely. Rational psychology affirms that one can know absolutely the self-being that belongs to pure thought, that such knowledge is possible based on pure thought itself, and that in the final analysis it is identical to that thought. The inaugural and fundamental determination of pure “psychology,” as found in Descartes, really signifies nothing else: because soul (absolute subjectivity, thought) is appearance’s original coming into itself, which makes it and therefore being in itself possible, because this arrival in itself is the essence of ipseity, then in fact “being” and “self-knowledge” are contained as identical in thought.

However, in a metaphysics of representivity that cannot represent (pose in being-represented) the condition of being-represented (i.e., the act of posing and representing itself), that condition (i.e., pure thought’s “I”) necessarily escapes the phenomenality it forever founds. “Thought, taken by itself, is merely the logical function, and therefore the pure spontaneity of the combination of the manifold of a merely possible intuition, and *does not exhibit the subject of consciousness as appearance.*” What is necessary for pure thought’s “I” to be an appearance or phenomena is, according to this text’s immediate continuation, an intuition. In other words, it is necessary that the self itself come into the condition of being-represented. Lacking such an intuition, there is only one thing to be said about pure thought’s “I,” and that is the strange conclusion of this paragraph: “I thereby represent myself to myself neither as I am nor as I appear to myself. *I think myself only as I do any object in general* from whose mode of intuition I abstract” (B 428–29; my emphasis).

Rational psychology’s presupposition remains intact even in its radical critique because pure thought, that simple “logical function,”

that "spontaneity of the combination of the manifold of a merely possible intuition," is named "I." Admittedly, the *Critique* constantly and in its eyes categorically separates itself from rational psychology by continually repeating that synthetic knowledge of real self-being or its real properties (identity, simplicity, permanence, and immateriality) cannot be deduced from pure thought's "I." Even though it is granted with bad grace and surrounded with many reservations and restrictions, an enormous concession remains, the concession of the phenomenality and ipseity of the nonecstatic and thus nonphenomenal condition of all ek-stasis and all possible phenomenality—in Kantian terms, the inherence of an "I" in pure thought. And yet that concession is constant throughout the Kantian text: "In the transcendental synthesis of the manifold of representations in general, and therefore in the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am" (B 157). "The 'I' is indeed in all thoughts" (A 350). "The one condition which accompanies all thought is the 'I' in the universal proposition 'I think'" (A 398). "The proposition that expresses self-consciousness—'I think'" (A 398–99). So what about the "I" in "I think"?

The insurmountable difficulty in which Kantianism finds itself must be clearly understood. It is nothing less than a question of defining the being of "I," independent of the conditions of being in general and thus abstracted from both intuition, empirical and pure, and concepts. But when it is necessary to assign a foundation to the existence of the "I think," no longer considered as an empirical proposition supported by intuition¹⁰ but by pure thought, Kant's predicament becomes inextricable. It is manifested in the very words he uses to designate the "I think": a concept and a proposition, "the concept or, if the term be preferred, the judgment," an expression or simple presentation of thought; "it serves only to introduce all our thought," "the formal proposition," an intelligence conscious solely of its power of combination,¹¹ and so on. The very term *concept*, which, taken literally, was to replace the problem of determining the being of "I think" in the context of the general constitution of experi-

ence, could not be retained and was explicitly rejected.¹² On the other hand, when it is said, constantly, that "I think" is a "proposition," what this proposition expresses is the spontaneity of pure thought. That this thought, according to all the Kantian expressions (a "logical unity," "a logically simple subject," "an analytic proposition," "this identity of the subject," etc.),¹³ is merely an empty form means that *it deprives itself of being*. Being's advent implies the transcendental deployment of the powers that make the *object relationship*, namely, *ek-stasis and the reception of sensation in it*, possible as empirical intuition. With empirical intuition put aside, how can the being of that pure and empty form, which thought is in itself, be determined when it is abstracted from what it constitutes as object? Kant expressly affirms that thought is given neither to the concept nor to intuition. How, then, can it come forth by itself in being? This is an unavoidable question if the being of "I think" is that of the power that intuits and thinks, of ek-stasis.

Wherever Kant attempts to designate the being of "I think," the only expression that he uses without immediately feeling the need to rectify and replace it with another is "intellectual representation." By this he first means, negatively, that such a representation contains no empirical element, no sensation; these are the *Critique's* explicit presuppositions, seeking in intuition the condition of existence and being, which are beyond reach. Positively, "intellectual representation" means that *when I say "I think," I am really representing to myself that I think*. From the very beginning Kant has substituted a representation of the cogito for the cogito itself. For phenomenality's mode of self-phenomenalization in the original dimension of revelation that defines the cogito itself, the soul, Descartes's thought (a revelation of which Kant knows nothing), he has substituted the phenomenality of representation, the only phenomenality he knows, one produced in ek-stasis, in thought considered as representation *and in intuition*. This explains the amazing note in the second edition's critique of the paralogisms and its sudden transition from a definition of "I think" as an empirical proposition to a definition of that same "I think" as "purely intellectual" (*rein intellektuel*).¹⁴ Both

definitions of the "I," as (indeterminate) empirical intuition and as purely intellectual representation, as well as the slippage from one to the other, are made possible by their common basis in the same ecstatic structure of phenomenality, by that structure's essence.

That Kant substitutes the cogito's representation for the cogito itself is apparent from his very manner of envisioning it: precisely, as an *expression*, as the statement in which thought represents itself. But this expression, this statement, ends up taking the place of and presenting itself as that thought. Therefore, the "fashion" in which Kant "calls," "designates," "expresses," or "represents" the "I think" camouflages and denatures its true being, reducing it to that name, designation, or expression, to "the proposition 'I think'"—to the content of a representation. But when "I think," the condition of possibility of its own representation and of all representation in general, is reduced to the content of representation, not only is the being of "I think" obliterated, but even the condition of that representation "I think," and of every other.

Kant takes the metaphysics of representivity to the limit, to that extreme point where claiming ultimately to found itself, to subordinate its own condition to representation, it falls into the abyss and self-destructs. But with that condition of all representation not only is representation lost, but so is its wholly other, that condition itself, the being of "I think," the essence of life.

In the technique of Kant's text, the substitution of the cogito's representation for the cogito itself, as the condition of its coming into being in phenomena, is explicit. The "I think" is the condition of all unity, the synthetic unity that reunites intuition's manifold in a single representation. As such, it is the form of apperception. Is that form of apperception a phenomenon? Does it already contain the most original essence of the self-revelation that would make it already, as apperception, a mode of life and thus the actuality of the first experience? Kant denies it: the form of apperception is inherent in all experience, but it is not an experience itself.¹⁵ What would be necessary for it to become one, for that condition of all unity, the unity of consciousness itself, to become self-conscious? It would be necessary for it to be

represented: "Self-consciousness in general is therefore the representation of that which is the condition of all unity" (A 401).

But here we must reverse Kant's proposition. We must reject the possibility of the condition of representation being itself represented. Not only would the coming into representation of its own condition, the "I think," cause the whole system to crumble (since being-represented never *is* except when held by, posed before and by, the "I think," so that "I think" itself can never come into the condition of being represented). But that logical prescription of the system of representation, which according to Kant makes the "I" of thought the logical condition of representation and thus of experience in general, is merely the speculative and still blind formulation of a much more radical phenomenological prescription—namely, that it is necessarily impossible for a thought originally self-constituted as immanent coming into itself (as ipseity, as "I think") to show itself in exteriority's phenomenological center, to be "represented." And that is what Kantianism, in the critique of the paralogisms, pronouncing its own condemnation, will masterfully establish.

According to Kant's declaration, "I think" is "the sole text of rational psychology" (A 343, B 401). But that text itself is something only as the "*proposition*, I think," only as a purely intellectual representation; in other words, insofar as the "I think" is the object of that representation. Since "I think" is necessarily irrepresentable, the poverty of that representation is obvious, *the fundamental ontological poverty of the sole text of rational psychology*. Thus, once this paralogism (not rational psychology's, but Kant's; i.e., the substitution of representation for "I think") is recognized, the critique of the paralogism appears to be an admirable description of that "poorest of all representations" (B 408). It quite correctly shows the impossibility of erecting a positive science on such a narrow base.

The poverty of the representation "I think" is often brought to light, it is true, with the aid of a comparison between that representation's content and the conditions that the experience of real objects must fulfill. It is precisely because it does not obey those conditions that such a content is declared empty or illusory. Thus one explains

the sterility of that representation by the fact that it contains no manifold. Or one shows that it is not a concept but merely the representation of the formal condition of thought, of the vehicle of all concepts.

Sometimes, however, the emptiness of such a representation is described in its own right. For example, in the paralogism of "simplicity," the first edition uses that word in two different senses. First, *simplicity* means a positive character that is supposed to determine self-being as that self's real predicate. This determination, however, constitutes the paralogism. On the other hand, in the following development, the term *simplicity* was reserved for the being of the representation "I think" because that being is not a being, because it is characterized by its essential poverty, which is nothing but a pure, empty, and represented unity. Simplicity means precisely the poverty of an empty representation. "I am simple" means nothing more than that this representation, 'I . . . is absolute (although merely logical) unity.' This simplicity therefore designates "a something in general . . . the representation of which must, no doubt, be *simple*, if only for the reason that there is nothing determinate in it. Nothing, indeed, can be represented that is simpler than that which is represented through the concept of a mere something."¹⁶

The poverty of the representation "I think" is also denounced in another text, all the more remarkable in that *it is at the very moment when the self is confounded with its representation that the poverty of its being is manifested as a phenomenological character belonging to that representation itself*: "In what we entitle 'soul' . . . there is nothing abiding except (if we must so express ourselves) the 'I', which is simple solely because its representation has no content" (A 381). That is why when Kant again declares that the proposition "everything in the world is *in a flux* and nothing is *permanent* and abiding . . . is not refuted by the unity of self-consciousness" (A 364), we must remember that the poverty of a being, the consideration of which is not sufficient to drive away the idea of universal flux, is really the poverty of a representation since in Kant, *the unity of self-consciousness is nothing but the representation of the unity of consciousness*.

The emptiness of the representation "I think," which represents a mere thing in general ("Through this I or he or it (the thing) which thinks, nothing further is represented than a transcendental subject of the thoughts = X," A 346, B 404), explains why such an indeterminate content can accommodate itself to so many ulterior explanations, provided that those explanations retain at least a small portion of the unreal character of such an empty representation. Henceforth, based on the ontological poverty of the representation "I think," the declension of the subject of thought, a subject of which nothing is known (*ibid.*), becomes possible. This subject can then appear as the "I" that constructs the universe (the subject of representation), the object of inner sense, the point of reference to which subjective representations are related, an ideal term produced by Reason to unify inner phenomena, an Idea or an unknown and unknowable thing-in-itself, or finally as the passive self-posed self. Obviously, these significations, which come to specify the transcendental object, do not appear contingently. Rather, they respond to the system's necessities and correspond to its different moments. Thus the distance separating the determinable, self-posed self from the determined and known empirical self measures the progress of the constitution of experience. But no real determination is conferred on the transcendental object when it is clothed in these various characters. What that transcendental object, Self, brings to them is a sort of aptitude for serving them as subject, an aptitude that it owes entirely to its indetermination. Just as clouds can take any form that one imagines because they don't have any form of their own, the content of the representation "I think," the transcendental ego of which each contemporary phenomenology speaks, is an accommodating phantom.

As indeterminate and impoverished as the representation "I think" may be, it is still too rich since it is proposed as the representation of a self, since the transcendental object = X that it designates is a transcendental subject fundamentally affected in its being by an ipseity conferred on it, however unwittingly, by an essential property that makes it not only "that it" but "that I." It is precisely because the

representation "I think" contains an "I" that it can support all the specifications that the system, according to its needs, progressively gives it. For what decisively marks each of these specifications is that each of them—whether subject of knowledge to which every known object is referred as to an "I represent" (or noumenal self not to be confused with inner experience's object, reducing that experience's pretension to reveal our true being) or idea of soul as the heuristic concept that allows us to separate inner and outer phenomena—each of these specifications of the "I think" contains that hidden ipseity that they borrow from the simple representation "I." That is why such a representation is not as impoverished as it seems: if its poverty permits its declension, its unnoticed positivity draws toward it, or its ipseity, all the system's determinations that imply that ipseity—and they all imply it!

The "simple representation 'I'" secretly obeys the insurmountable prescriptions of ipseity's essence, which, in the end, are those of life. It is not really the representation of the self but of *one* self, of an always particular and individual ego, as Kant profoundly recognizes when he declares that the representation "I am," which rules the assertions of pure psychology, is a "singular" representation and that "it is individual in all respects."¹⁷ It is precisely when that essentially singular and individual representation is taken to be universal that the paralogism arises.

But why does "I think" represent a necessarily singular and individual reality unless everything constituted by and containing ipseity's essence (self-affection), by experiencing itself and then having that (actual) experience as the content of its being, necessarily is that particular and individual experienced reality: itself. Self-affection's essence accomplishes itself phenomenologically only as a determinate affection. Thus Kant is correct in reproaching pure psychology for claiming to "determine the object in itself independently of experience, and so by mere reason" (A 405). But experience can be a self-experience, the experience of that individual and singular real self that each of us is, the self of soul and life, only if it is not a representa-

tion, only if it gets its original phenomenological possibility from somewhere other than ek-stasis.

That is why to elucidate more fully the nature of life and more important, to rediscover it, we must now turn toward thoughts that although they do not have the extraordinary analytical apparatus of Kantianism or display its conceptual splendor, nonetheless point more surely toward the Essential.

5 *Life Rediscovered: The World as Will*

If Schopenhauer can be seen today as one of history's most important philosophers, despite the uncertainty, incoherence, and theoretical deficiencies of his doctrine, it is because he introduced a radical rupture into that history: the explicit and crucial rejection of the interpretation of being as representivity. Not that Schopenhauer is ignorant of or minimizes the amplitude of the field opened by representation, which in his eyes co-constitutes the being of the world or rather defines and is identical to it. "The world is my representation."¹ In this way, it was possible both to continue and assuage what was already in 1818 called the Kantian tradition—the thesis that representation determines "all possible and conceivable experience," that "everything that exists for knowledge, and hence the whole of this world, is only object in relation to the subject" (*World* 1, 3). More important, a crucial element of that tradition, which we have gone over in great detail (i.e., "that which knows all things and is known by none is the *subject*," 1, 5) does not escape Schopenhauer.

But one nuance (one of those imperceptible nuances that establishes a world infinitely close to and yet infinitely far from the preceding one, a new world) comes to light right from the start of that major

work, *The World as Will and Representation*. On the one hand, there is an understanding of the essential connection, taken up from Berkeley and opposed to Fichte, in which subject and object go together and constitute one and the same form, that of all possible representability: "The division into object and subject is the first, universal, and essential form of . . . representation" (1, 25). Consequently there is no crucial advance in the domain of being. There is no metaphysical break from the opposition of subject and object toward the thing in itself, the liberty of the subject as opposed to the necessity of the object, for example—because such an opposition is not an opposition. It is rooted in one and the same essence. There is an "inseparable and reciprocal dependence of subject and object" (1, 31). The identicalness of the subject's subject-being and the object's object-being is Schopenhauer's intuition at the moment when he describes the structure of a unitary world as representability. But on the other hand, it is precisely this structure of the world of representation that Schopenhauer radically rejects as incapable of including or exhibiting reality's essence. A devalorization of the concept of representation follows (a concept that has driven philosophical thought since Kant, and according to Heidegger, since Descartes), a devalorization that is not relative but absolute since it signifies the original incompatibility of reality and representation, the latter flowing off into the domain of unreality, designating and defining it.

This sheds some light on the major reason for what is usually considered one of Schopenhauer's major errors, a strange error for a philosopher who demonstrated such precise knowledge of numerous Kantian points. This "error" consists of reducing the famous thesis "We know only phenomena" to a phenomenalism, a reduction that allows Kant's thought to be assimilated first to Plato, for whom sensible phenomena are the mere appearance of a deeper reality, and then to Indian thinking, which views the entire apparent universe as illusion, the veil of Maya. Kant's whole doctrine aims at the careful separation of subjective appearance, the mere flux of representations, from the necessary order that makes them true, that makes them precisely phenomena. But that is possible only if the representational

field has the power to produce truth, the truth of phenomena, only if, more radically, representation is constituted in itself as such a power, a power of intuition and thought. Once that power is removed, once intuition and thought are no longer considered in their specificity but in their common essence as representation, then the phenomenality embodied and actualized by that representation disconnects from reality; then indeed that phenomenality's appearance and phenomenological content contain no reality, nor can they ever. What Schopenhauer rejects is representation's mode of presentation, its accomplishment as a "posing before" in and by exteriority, rejecting the very possibility of attaining reality from outside. His "error" concerning Kantian phenomena reveals his greatest justification.

This error appears even more significant if we note that far from misunderstanding the order of things (true phenomena, pure appearance, as opposed to mere flux), Schopenhauer affirms that causal thought is already present in amoebas and that understanding is at work wherever there is representation. The amalgam created by Schopenhauer in the principle of reason (i.e., the affirmation that causality is coextensive with representation and that it exists on the same level as the a priori forms of sensibility) is comprehensible only as part of a thinking that deliberately surpasses the question of rational truth (the necessity of "phenomena") and ultimately questions the condition of possibility of transcendental truth itself, namely, the mode of appearance and phenomenological presentation in and as itself. Representation itself, not its modes of representation, its necessity or contingency, is taken into consideration. Or rather, differing in this from Kant's *theory*, if contingency quickly becomes Schopenhauer's reality index, it is only because by calling representation into question from within, contingency designates the fundamentally unrepresentable.

But how can one indicate the unrepresentable in and through representation? For Schopenhauer, representation designates the sphere of unreality, and that is why there is no real difference for him between phenomena, whether scientifically determined, simple subjective appearance, or even dreams. That is why India as well as Plato

can be invoked to signify that essential unreality and finally why the waking world, as representation, is the same as the dream world, both "leaves of one and the same book." But again, what is it that permits a reading of actually appearing appearance as that essential unreality? What makes it possible to say that what exhibits itself in representation is not reality, that it misses reality completely? Could it be the totally strange idea (not to mention its implied transcendental usage of the causality principle) that in order for there to be appearances and phenomena in general, there must be something in them that appears, for lack of which they would be the appearance of nothing, pure phantoms? But why would the thing that appears in appearance be any different from appearance? Why couldn't reality hide itself in the contents of appearance and define itself by them?

The answer to this question, crucial to all philosophy, must be radical, and Schopenhauer answers in the form of two fundamental assertions: First, there is a reality-in-itself, totally foreign to the world of representation, excluded from its phenomenological mode of presentation and content. Because reality escapes the world of representation, that world is the realm and appearance of unreality, an "empty" appearance incapable of exhibiting reality in itself. Second, reality-in-itself is accessible to us, and because we have access to it, we know and experience the world of representation as pure appearance. Reality-in-itself is will. The mode in which it presents itself to us is our body. Since these theses are so important, they deserve systematic elucidation.

It would be totally wrong to think of this *will* in the usual sense of the word, to think even for a moment of assimilating or even comparing it to the will of classical philosophy, will as such, the simple fact of willing or not willing and ultimately the pure unconditioned and absolute power of willing or not willing. Schopenhauer's will has nothing to do with Descartes's "free will," which is indifferent and contains no principle of action, which therefore determines itself absolutely freely, assenting to motives that it finds outside itself, in understanding, for example. In the final analysis, understanding indicates what content our action must have; will is there merely to say

yes or no, unconditionally. But Schopenhauer's will has nothing to do with understanding. Far from asking understanding for a law to govern and model its actions, it carries that law within itself. It does not regard its action as a possibility; it *is* that action and has already decided to accomplish it. It is one with its action and its content.

This is not simply a matter of overturning the classical thesis and moving toward psychoanalysis, affirming that we do not will a thing because we represent and judge it as good but that we judge it as good because we will it, because in reality we desire it; and because we desire it, we accomplish it. For Schopenhauer too, *will* undoubtedly means "desire," but, once again, not in the usual sense of the word, that is, an old-fashioned subjectivity, a simple preliminary to action, its inner but as yet unrealized plan waiting for a power other than itself to realize that plan. In Schopenhauer, desire is never prior to action. There is only one force, never separate from itself, whose action is its deployment and necessary inner accomplishment. Far from being separate from reality, capable of preceding, creating, or denying it, will is immanent and identical to it, constituting its essence.

All our misunderstandings concerning Schopenhauer's concept of will (for example, its assimilation to Kant's, Hegel's, or even Schelling's concepts, which are all pure concepts of will, reduced to the fact or power of willing or not willing; in short, to what it is) can be removed simply by noting that for Schopenhauer, Will means something wholly different from pure will, namely life. *Will means life's will to live*, so that all the essential determinations of Schopenhauer's central concept (will-to-live) are explained by life, not by "will." What does will-to-live mean? Not the fact that a pure, self-sufficient will would somehow try to "act," to make itself real, to will. To will what—Life? Something outside or different from itself? And why, starting from itself and its own essence, would will want something else, that strange life with its complex properties, which are impossible to understand or explain by means of pure will? In Schopenhauer's will, will is not principal, not *naturans*. It does not will; life does. Living is primary. Life constitutes reality, determines ac-

tion, decides to act, to realize itself. For what does will-to-live will? Once again, not will, not willing itself and its use, but life. Will-to-live wills itself, not as will but as life. It desires nothing but life's self-affirmation, a reiterated positing of life, of its nature, of all its determinations.

Briefly, then, in Schopenhauer's will-to-live, what wills *and* what it wills is life. Schopenhauer's peculiar position, relative to classical theses, is that since will is identical to life and completely exterior to pure will, it is impossible, starting from pure will, to get back to life. But if in will-to-live life thinks only of life, if it wills itself, positing itself with its own and not will's gesture, if it has nothing to do with will and wills anything but will, it is because the concept of will-to-will, by which one claims to characterize the modern technological world, has nothing to do with Schopenhauer's thought since he (and later, Marx) rejects the concept of a formal and empty will from which one cannot arrive at anything but that will-to-will, itself formal and empty. But if one starts from life, then one is immediately in reality; the gesture with which one is concerned is a real gesture, precisely the gesture of life and its infinite recommencement.

But why, then, does life clothe itself as reiteration? Why, more precisely, does life's self-relation, since only life matters in will-to-live, express itself as will? For if reality is one with itself and completely present to and in itself, how can it still desire itself? How can it claim to fill a nonexistent gap that supposedly separates it from itself? Here a certain conception of life and reality must be noted: Schopenhauer conceives of them both as essentially affected by a lack, not a lack-of-self but a lack-in-self. In fact, life never stops attaining itself, posing itself in being. It is infinite reiteration. But what it attains each time, what it unceasingly poses as itself, as its own being, is a lack consubstantial with itself. Life is reality, but a reality essentially constituted by its lack of reality, eternally pursuing and lacking reality. For since there is no reality except as lack of reality, no reality can fill that lack. All it can do is infinitely repeat it. Reality is a "hungry reality," an "inextinguishable thirst," and this allows us to form some idea of the hell that Schopenhauer symbolizes by Ixion's wheel. Because this is

life's reality, Schopenhauer more generally calls life a will, will-to-live. This will is not abstract like the concept of pure will but is rooted in reality or is identical with it, since it is in itself lack of reality. The interpretation of life as will-to-live, of reality as an eternal lack of reality, also furnished Schopenhauer with a terrifying idea of time, both real and empty: real because it is the movement of reality itself; empty because determined in reality by lack of reality, it is reality's infinite reproduction of that lack.

With the interpretation of life as will-to-live and its inherent tragic themes, which made Schopenhauer famous in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the crucial meaning of life as identical to will is still not taken into account but lost. Nevertheless, that significance is implied in the very title of his major work, a strange title at first glance, carrying a shocking dissymmetry, which, however, is merely apparent. For if the proposition "the world as representation" explicitly announces "appearance" as its topic, even if this appearance is understood as exposing its essence in the form of representivity, if therefore its pretension is ontological, the proposition that Schopenhauer opposes to it and that circumscribes the book's argument, "the world as will," is no less important. In other words, will cannot designate what appears if the mode of that appearance (i.e., appearance as such) is constituted by representation. This must now be firmly established.

Will and representation oppose each other as reality and unreality do. Unreality is necessarily bound to representation. What is represented is not unreal in itself. On the contrary, according to Schopenhauer, the essence of the represented world is will; that is, reality itself and, what is more, the only reality since outside of will there is nothing. Insofar as what is to be represented enters into representation and holds itself there, it becomes unreal—insofar as representation cannot exhibit reality, insofar as reality is incapable of appearing before itself, of presenting itself as an object.

But what has just been said of representation's unreality is equally true of will's reality. Will in itself, as will-to-live, does not constitute

reality, the proof being that as long as it is represented, it floats before us as appearance and illusion; it is the veil of Maya. *Therefore, will is reality only in a mode of revelation that reveals will in itself, in its reality.* So only will's mode of revelation and more important, a mode of revelation that constitutes and is identical to reality in general can reveal will in itself as it is. Above all, will has the radical ontological significance of circumscribing a mode of revelation in which reality is capable of being revealed in itself, in which reality is in fact constituted. Schopenhauer's abyssal intuition is that will's *sui generis* appearance is the only thing that can make it real.

Henceforth, the life concept is split: alongside the first, still naive, and rather ontic determination where life dwells in will-to-live and thus proposes itself as endless desire, stands the essential, ontological determination where life designates will's mode of self-presentation, a mode in which will experiences itself immediately, not a simple will-to-live but a living will. Because it was not brought to light or even grasped as such, the secret competition between these two concepts of life in Schopenhauer's philosophy erodes it from inside, bringing it to ruin. Nevertheless, this competition gives Schopenhauer's philosophy its unheard-of depth and the strange power that fascinates us even now.

The dichotomy of appearance, its double process of realization and phenomenalization in inner immediacy and reality-duplicating representation, now presenting itself in and as itself, now as an appearance that lacking the ability to produce that reality, is a pure phantom: such is "the world as will and representation." The essential texts show will, before it is will, constituting a mode of access to reality fundamentally opposed to representability: "my will in so far as I am conscious of it in an entirely different way comparable with no other" (I, 103). The identification of will with a pure, original mode of appearance wholly different from representivity is made plain when Schopenhauer speaks of "quite another way [of being known], *toto genere* different, that is denoted by the word *will*" (I, 103). The following passage gives a rapid but decisive elucidation of

will's original mode of manifestation, an elucidation consisting of the recognition of immediacy and the related rejection of representation's form of opposing subject and object, knower and known:

The concept of *will* is . . . the only one that has its origin *not* in the phenomenon, *not* in the mere representation of perception, but which comes from within, and proceeds from the most immediate consciousness of everyone. In this consciousness each one knows and at the same time is himself his own individuality according to its nature immediately, without any form, even the form of subject and object, for here knower and known coincide." (1, 112)

The connection of will with original appearance in which will alone defines and constitutes reality is unveiled in regard to the body, and now Schopenhauer's second essential thesis, that there is a reality-in-itself whose mode of manifestation is the body, claims our attention. Note first that this thesis is explicit: "The thing-in-itself is known immediately in so far as it appears as [the knower's] own body" (1, 19). However, if body is merely will's appearance, it must in conformity with the division of appearance into its two fundamental modes of accomplishment be divided itself, and this doubling of the body is in fact one of Schopenhauer's most original (in the era's German context) affirmations. This doubling occurs in accord with the duplicity of body's mode of manifestation: "This body is given in two entirely different ways. It is given in intelligent perception as representation. . . . But it is also given simultaneously (*zugleich*) in quite a different way, namely as what is known immediately to everyone, and is denoted by the word *will*" (1, 100; translation modified). The important thing in this text, which Schopenhauer thought sufficiently important to write several times, is not only the striking repetition of will's connection with a specific and immediate mode of manifestation but for our purposes the word "simultaneously." Indeed, for Schopenhauer, there are two bodily "realities," two bodies, only in appearance. In appearance, since appearance is not solely Will but also representation, the single body-in-itself (my body) wears a double aspect; one merits that name, the outer face in which our objective body resembles other bodies, but the "second side" is

not a "side." It presents no face to anyone and has no visage, presenting itself only in itself where it coincides with the force that flows through me and I am one with it.

We must be careful not to mistake Schopenhauer's crucial intuition of the radically immanent and absolute body, which as thing-in-itself he calls Will, for its objective aspect, which he often calls "body": "Every true act of his will is also at once and inevitably a movement of his body; he cannot actually will the act without at the same time being aware that it appears as a movement of the body" (1, 100). In any case, the objective bodily modification cannot be considered as the product or effect of will's action. Here the whole problem of soul's action on body is discarded. It must be understood that every determination of the radically immanent force that constitutes our own being also presents itself to us, simultaneous with its accomplishment, which is our inner being, as the appearance of an objective displacement in space: "The act of will and the action of the body are not two different states objectively known, connected by the bond of causality . . . but are one and the same thing, though given in two entirely different ways, first quite directly, and then in perception for the understanding. The action of the body is nothing but the act of will objectified, i.e., translated into perception" (1, 100).

Schopenhauer takes care to emphasize that body cannot be reduced to the appearance it offers in "representative intuition," what tradition generally considers as "body" in its supposed opposition to "soul." On the contrary, he asserts that body, in its real being, which is constitutive of soul, encloses and identifies with the immediate experience of will-to-live: "My body is the only object of which I know not merely the one side, that of the representation, but also the other, that is called *will*" (1, 125). And again, when it is a question of understanding how body's representation differs from all others, the answer rules out any equivocation: "This [difference] is that the body occurs in consciousness in quite another way, *toto genere* different, that is denoted by the word *will*" (1, 103).

The crucial fact, our key to the universe, is that the body proper, unlike every other object, cannot be reduced to its representation but

"is also will." The "double knowledge" we have of our body does not, therefore, constitute a simple property belonging and limited to that body, even though in one sense that is true. For it is only in and by our body that we immediately experience and identify with will-to-live at our being's depths. Such a situation determines what Schopenhauer calls theoretical egoism: the affirmation that there is only one will in the world, mine, and therefore only a single reality, whereas all the rest is relegated to the fantastic appearance of representation, to the precarious condition of everything that is merely an object for me. But that purely theoretical (and theoretically irrefutable) affirmation quickly runs into the analogy that I discover between what I experience at my being's depths and the movements and forces existing in nature: the same will is manifest in me and them, just as the same will immediately reveals itself in my immanent body and is represented in my objective body. And just as my body is both the inner experience of will *and* its "simultaneous" translation into the appearance of displacements and movements in space, so too in all displacements and movements, not merely my own, I glimpse not their cause, which is only apparent or "occasional," as Schopenhauer says but the same obstinate power that works in me and continually hurls me into my desires and needs.

For my knowledge of the world, my body is what the Rosetta stone was for the deciphering of hieroglyphs. My body is a tablet on which two texts are engraved—the one known by heart and perfectly intelligible; the other obscure and composed of strange characters with surprising forms whose meaning nonetheless is about to appear to me. For the meaning of these feet and hands, these teeth and nails, this voracious mouth, this sex organ, and these eyes is something that I have always known. It is what I am, the will-to-live that shoots through me and that I abandon myself to. But just as the first text written on my body allows me to read the second, so the secret of the whole world's book is revealed to me: the movement of these hands and feet, which are mine, these fingers, this glance, these teeth and nails, is similar to those that I see around me in animals, in the contractions and displacements of those peduncles, those tentacles,

those antennae and claws, in all the mouths and sex organs through which the same obstinate force is unfurled, the same will that never stops willing what it never obtains in appearance. And even in the mineral world, the structuring of things, the stratification of rocks and landforms, the force of magnetic fields, the configuration of crystals, everywhere betrays the work of the same coherent force that holds social groups and entire societies together.

Thus the veil covering all the hieroglyphs in the universe is suddenly removed: they are nothing but the phenomena and diverse representations of the same will-to-live. But this "will," the reality of everything, the thing-in-itself, reveals itself only in me, in my original body whose immanent appearance is the immediate appearance of that will itself. Schopenhauer's problem was to understand how the world of representation, to which our experience seems reducible, can be experienced by us as a mere mode of experience; in other words, why we seek its "meaning," a "transition from it as mere representation . . . to whatever it may be besides this" (I, 99). The answer is that we have a body, which in itself is such a passage, the immediate experience of what happens behind mere appearance—namely, will.

This fundamental thesis of the bodily experience of will is the basis of Schopenhauer's entire edifice. For since we have absolutely certain knowledge of will ("we know and understand that will better than anything else," I, 111) and since we know from bodily experience that it is endless since the whole world is merely the image of that hungry will, which we see entering a million times into battle with itself, devouring itself in a universal and monstrous confrontation, then we can understand the intent of this philosophy: to put an end to that absurd will, to lead it not to its self-suppression, which would still be a manifestation and affirmation of itself as in suicide, but to its extinction, the final and only issue not willed by will, accomplished in those redemptive experiences given to man: art, the morality of pity, and religion.

Even though knowledge of the world, which gives rise to ethics, is based on the inner experience of reality as adequate experience (i.e.,

experience of the thing-in-itself), Schopenhauer was unable to establish that primary assertion, and thus his entire philosophical edifice totters on its foundation. The phenomenological status of will, the mode of appearance from which it receives its reality and with which it ultimately coincides, is called into question. The reconsideration of this question in chapter 18 of the "Supplement to the Second Book" marks the collapse of the crucial thesis of the identicalness of appearance and will and its reabsorption into the most classical conceptions. First, however, the primacy of self-knowledge, based on its immediacy, is categorically reaffirmed. "About *himself* everyone knows immediately (*unmittelbar*), about everything else only very mediately" (2, 192; translation modified). Because of that immediacy, self-knowledge constitutes the principle of comprehending all nature and formulates the central intuition of all essential metaphysics: the self, far from being determined by the world (i.e., by the whole of scientific knowledge projected upon it as upon one rather peculiar object among all others) constitutes not only the point of departure but the condition of possibility of all the rest. "We must learn to understand nature from ourselves, not ourselves from nature" (2, 196). Immediate self-knowledge is will-knowledge, and that is why "our *willing* is the only opportunity we have of understanding simultaneously from within any event that outwardly manifests itself; consequently, it is the one thing known to us *immediately*, and not given to us merely in the representation, as all else is" (2, 196). Because mediation belongs to an appearance consisting of representation and its structure, immediation thinks the radical exclusion of mediation. Therefore, will as thing-in-itself must be totally independent of representation, constituting an original mode of revelation that delivers it to itself just as it is. "The *thing-in-itself* can come into consciousness only quite directly, namely by *it itself being conscious of itself* (*daß es selbst sich seiner bewußt wird*)" (2, 195).

But it is precisely this ultimate presupposition that Schopenhauer can neither hold nor establish, and the crucial theses just recalled are progressively abandoned. Thus we learn that "the inward observation we have of our own will still does not by any means furnish an

exhaustive and adequate knowledge of the thing-in-itself" because it is not "wholly immediate" (2, 196). What does it mean that the immediate knowledge of will is not wholly immediate? Two different things, really, but each equally ruinous: on the one hand, the intervention of a whole series of metaphysical mediations ("intermediaries," says Schopenhauer), namely, the fact that will creates a body and an intellect, thus instituting a double relation to the external world and oneself, a reflective consciousness that is the counterpart of world-consciousness. At this point a new, though implicit, use of the concept of objectification comes to the fore through which that concept loses its strict ontological significance, which identified it with the pure appearance of representation, and comes to mean an ontic process, namely, creation in the strict sense. On the other hand, and even more distressing, returning to the ontological signification that assimilates it to representation, the mediation to which will-in-itself must submit becomes representation itself since representation becomes once again, as in Kant, the only conceivable mode of manifestation. Henceforth, everything crucial that has been said about the elimination of representation and its inability to exhibit reality is lost. Indeed, will enters experience solely in and by representation, and the form of representability it flows from becomes that of opposition, the opposition of subject and object, which again defines the condition of all possible experience, especially that of self. A radical separation is instituted between knowledge and the known, between knowledge that is unknown and knowledge that has no power to know, the respective situations of representation and will: a representation that captures and condenses the essence of appearance and a will deprived of appearance, nothing but blind, dead content.

Thus, lacking sufficient elaboration, the above-mentioned capital affirmation that the concept of will comes from the very bottom of the immediate consciousness of the individual who knows himself immediately "without any form, even the form of subject and object, for here knower and known coincide" (1, 112), is contradicted and denied when Schopenhauer declares "this knowledge of the thing-in-itself is not wholly adequate" (2, 196). First *it is tied to the form of*

representation; it is perception and therefore divided into subject and object. "For even in self-consciousness, the I is not absolutely simple, but consists of a knower (intellect) and a known (will); the former is not known and the latter is not knowing" (2, 197). The metaphysics of opposition rules once again: "Even in inner knowledge there still occurs a difference between the being-in-itself of its object and the observation or perception of this object in the knowing subject" (2, 197). What distinction, then, can be established between the inner experience of will insofar as it remains the apprehension of itself as enigmatic object by a power different than itself and the experience of the world in general, the experience of all the other enigmatic realities, illumined from the exterior by a power of knowledge different from them and unable really to penetrate them?

Schopenhauer could not elude the question of inner and outer experience's dissociation: whereas outer experience is composed of the *principium individuationis* (the intuitions of space, time, and causality), inner experience includes only "the form of time, as well as that of being known and of knowing" (2, 197). This "time," which as in Kant constitutes the form of inner sense, does not differ in the least from Kant's representational time. On the contrary, it identifies with it. It is the deepest structure and ultimate precondition of representation, the structure of opposition, rediscovered in the simple relationship of "being known and of knowing." *The opposition of inner and outer experience is no longer decisive. Far from calling the essence of representivity into question, it situates itself inside of and explicitly refers to representivity.* Thus, however much one might protest that despite its imperfections, "the apprehension in which we know the stirrings and acts of our own will is far more immediate than is any other" and that "it is the point where the thing-in-itself enters the phenomenon most immediately, and is most closely examined by the knowing subject" (2, 197), it remains true that this phenomenon, its light and appearance, is no longer that of will itself but differs from it fundamentally. But that is the only appearance there is, the appearance of the subject in its difference from what it knows, the appearance therefore of Difference: "My intellect, the only thing capable of

knowledge, still always remains distinguished from me as the one who wills" (2, 198). Will is forever deprived of this phenomenon, the only mode of phenomenalization. It has once again become the unknown and unknowable thing-in-itself. And that is why if one asks will "what it is, quite apart from the fact that it manifests itself," it must be said that "this question can *never* be answered" (2, 198). Thus Schopenhauer called the essence of representivity into question only to sink into a philosophy of night. Far from being removed, the crippling dilemma of Western thought sets in with a vengeance: *either representation or the unconscious.*

With the inability to recognize the specificity of will's own appearing, the whole philosophy of body is undone, losing in one stroke the extraordinary originality that Maine de Biran had brilliantly developed shortly before using appropriate means. For the original body is will itself, but only as immanent revelation, and that is really why it is our body; that is, the force we exercise as our own because we coincide with it in a revelatory power that does not pose it before, outside of, and always separate from us. *My body is possible only as unrepresented and unrepresentable.* If, then, as Schopenhauer momentarily recognized, body and will are identical ("the identity of the will and of the body," 1, 102), it is not only because they both designate the same reality, one and the same force, but because force is possible only as self-identical in a self-possessive experience of self, as a being-one-with-itself that allows it to be and do what it is and does. Will's self-revelation as self-experience-in-itself not only reveals will in-and-as-itself but also makes will possible as will, force, and body—which are our dwelling, in the sense that their indwelling is equally our own, our Self. They dwell in us, and we deploy them.

But will and body's ontological condition of possibility is destroyed when their specific mode of revelation (self-revelation-experience-possession; i.e., life's essence) is passed over in silence or even more mistakenly, replaced by representation. But this is just what happens in Schopenhauer when will's inner experience is reduced to temporal representation: will's henceforth unknown and in-

itself unknowable essence is replaced by a succession of voluntary, temporal acts, now appearing as objective bodily movements. But what enables us to feel that such acts are those of will? How can I distinguish them from simple natural processes or modifications of inner sense? They are now nothing but representations, and Schopenhauer rightly demonstrated that representations do not contain their own sense, nor can they be experienced as representations of will unless will is first presented to us. When the conditions of that original experience no longer exist, when will and appearance are separated, the possibility of getting behind representation to grasp what it represents collapses.

This is especially true of the peculiar representation that I call my body. After identifying will with body, section 18 of book 1 tends to dissociate them, as we have seen, reserving the name "body" for the representative intuition of bodily movement, the objective body. Yes, says Schopenhauer, "the action of the body is nothing but the act of will objectified, i.e., translated into perception" (1, 100). But body can be presented as objectivized will only after an experience of will-in-itself. For this will-body can appear as will's objectification only if we already know what will is. "Will is knowledge *a priori* of the body . . . body is knowledge *a posteriori* of the will" (1, 100). A *posteriori* means that since we experience our will and with it our body (the immanent body that we are), we then know that our objective body is merely a representation of the first, the representation of its force, drive, and will. But then this *a priori* knowledge of will's being-in-itself is negated. Now it manifests itself only in its phenomenal-temporal forms, the forms of our representative body and its acts. This representative body then becomes will's only possible manifestation and consequently the precondition of its knowledge. Thus Schopenhauer's thought becomes circular: will, the *a priori* precondition of knowledge of representative body, now has body as the precondition of its own knowledge.

Finally, the knowledge I have of my will, although an immediate knowledge, cannot be separated from that of my body. I know my will not as a whole, not as a unity, not completely according to its nature, *but only in its individual acts, and hence in time, which is the form of my body's*

appearing, as it is of every body. Therefore, the body is the condition of knowledge of my will. (1, 101–2; my emphasis)

The progressive dissociation of will and body and its corresponding reduction of immanent to representational body are not simple accidents but the ineluctable and ruinous consequence of the prior dissociation of will and appearance and ultimately the misunderstanding of appearance's original essence.

The beclouding of will-in-itself's primal mode of revelation infects the whole doctrine. Will, whose inner knowledge was to have unveiled the enigma of the universe, becomes the mere object of a negative discourse. Its essence is reconstructed antithetically based on the phenomenal world in a play of suppositions, all repeating the uncertainties of Kantianism. Since the phenomenal mode's structure is the *principium individuationis* and the *a priori* forms of sensibility always promote the reign of plurality, since will escapes that *principium*, it must be thought as an in-itself, as a universal force, and this is the basis for the inference that all phenomena, all of nature's forces at work in the diverse animal, vegetable, or mineral realms, are merely manifestations of a single will—in which the force that I experience in myself, in inner sense, is identical with the other forces tearing the universe apart.

Whereas the phenomenal world obeys the inflexible law of the principle of reason, and everything here below has a foundation; will, on the other hand, is foundationless and in that sense absolutely free. But everything that flows from will (our acts and more important, our character), even though will itself escapes the principle of reason, necessarily flows from that will, not only for phenomenal knowledge (which has been excluded) but in itself, since that irrational will is nontemporally determined. And finally, since the phenomenal world is the world of knowledge and more important, the only mode in which any knowledge whatsoever is possible, since will escapes that world, will comes to be characterized by *Erkenntnislosigkeit*. It is unknown, unknowable, and unknowing, and its mode of being is blindness.

Vielheitlosigkeit, Grundlosigkeit, Erkenntnislosigkeit, Ziellosigkeit—

all these negative determinations, meant to prevent the application of worldly discourse to will, are surreptitiously given a positive meaning, which Schopenhauer then uses in a totally illegitimate fashion to construct his own pessimism. Deprived of all reason, will becomes a blind force whose unleashing fills the universe with absurdities. Deprived of a goal, it becomes an endless effort that continually begins what it has already done: observe the natural force of gravity, for example, "the constant striving of which we see, although a final goal for it is obviously impossible" (1, 164); or plants, growing from bud to fruit to new bud; or animal procreation, where the individuals responsible for it progressively deteriorate while others recommence the cycle. In each of will's manifestations, the goal is always illusory, merely the beginning of a new process, and so on to infinity. Since will is ultimately singular, its plurality mere appearance, it infinitely recommences tangled self-defeating processes, pushing the absurdity of an absurd world to its limit. The purely negative determinations resulting from will's lack of phenomenological status are changed into pseudopositive determinations that lend Schopenhauer's universe its specific look. Here Schopenhauer shows himself to be Freud's true predecessor, proposing a completely unknowable dimension that serves as a receptacle for chimerical speculative constructions.

The precariousness of these constructions is plainly revealed in the crucial question that furnished Schopenhauer's system with its major contradiction—the question of individuality. This classical theme, taken up again by Kant, states that the individuality of a being is sufficiently established by the place it occupies in space and time since the presence of two realities in different places or times is sufficient to differentiate them. Husserl retains this way of seeing when he shows that if two exactly similar sounds (and thus, as far as their quiddity is concerned, two identical "objects") occur, the second reproducing the first, the respective position of these two immanent givens in phenomenological time will furnish the principle of their real distinction. There is absolutely no need to return to ideas (as Descartes and Leibniz thought). The precondition of real differ-

ence (*Vielheit*) is not diversity in concept (*Verschiedenheit*) but intuition. "For it is only by means of time and space that something which is one and the same according to its nature and the concept appears as different, as a plurality of coexistent and successive things" (1, 113). Space and time form the *principium individuationis*, and since they mutually define the structure of representation, every being's difference and multiplicity are situated in representation. As we have seen, since its noumenal essence is negatively constructed from representation's structures and properties, will can be conceived as a unique essence whose voluntary acts, like the forces, movements, and forms that proliferate in nature, are merely various appearances refracted in the prism of representation. And because representation opens a dimension of unreality, its inherent plurality and individuality are nothing but "appearance."

This devalorization of individuality and consequently of the individual is particularly noticeable in relation with species, which are identical to Ideas, immediate objectifications and true realizations of will,² eternal and atemporal forms, whereas the perishable individuals who compose them are merely illusory refractions infinitely repeated through space and time. With this valorization of the species to the detriment of the individual, Schopenhauer once again clears the path for Freud: "It is not the individual that nature cares for, but only the species" (1, 276).

Schopenhauer, however, also makes a very different or even totally opposite affirmation: individuality belongs to and originally determines will. This original connection of will and individuality is first recognized in the body, which is nothing but will's inner experience. In fact, the body is so radically individualized that the subject of knowledge, a pure impersonal and undifferentiated gaze, becomes an individual only in connection with (in and by its identity with) body: "The subject of knowing . . . appears as an individual only through his identity with the body" (1, 100). In this essential text, will is individual not because it is mired in representation's intuitive appearance as one of its effects but precisely because it escapes representation: "The concept of *will* is . . . the only one that has its origin *not*

in the phenomenon, *not* in the mere representation of perception, but which comes from within, and proceeds from the most immediate consciousness of everyone." And the text continues: "In this consciousness each one knows and at the same time is himself his own individuality according to its nature immediately, without any form, even the form of subject and object" (1, 112). So it is now impossible to affirm that "it is only by means of time and space that something which is one and the same according to its nature . . . appears as different, as a plurality" (1, 113), and the thesis that establishes the *principium individuationis* in representation's structure inevitably conflicts with the thesis that roots individuality in will itself.

But the latter thesis, far from being accidental, conditions entire sections of the system, especially those concerning character and style's a priori nature, so important in the esthetic domain (and Schopenhauer's esthetics had an enormous influence on nineteenth- and twentieth-century aesthetics and art itself). Will's atemporality, its opposition to representation's temporal structure, establishes "intelligible character," which makes an individual always act in the same way, in similar circumstances always repeat the same acts throughout its history. The multiplicity of these acts, sprinkled across representation's temporal form, far from constituting their individuality, their expression of the same character, presupposes character as an individuality belonging to intelligible character itself and ultimately to will whose immediate expression is that character. Similarly, the theory of style (i.e., the unity of an individual's manifestations and creations, a unity whose source is the body) refers to the body's individuality and therefore to will's, to an individuality prior to time rather than its result.

The contradiction between the theses that base individuality on representation on the one hand and will on the other is so overwhelming that it occasionally turns the one into the other, as can be seen in the theory of art. Here knowledge is no longer the principle of individuation. On the contrary: rising to the contemplation of Ideas and finding its fulfillment there, knowledge now delivers us from individuality, which is revealed to be a branch of body and thus of

will. This in fact is how Schopenhauer interprets the aesthetic experience and the disinterestedness that Kant in particular recognized in it: as the advent of a subject liberated from the desires and passions of the individual and thus of will, and instead open to pure perception of the thing-in-itself, independent of the chain of causes and reasons, which explain its existence only to the deluded gaze of science— independent too of its own position in relation to us, once again, independent of our motivations and interests. The thing's existence-in-itself unveils itself in the pure experience of its beauty: not the experience of *this* flower but of the flower-*in-itself*; life's immediate objectification, its Idea, indifferent to time, the events of the world, and our cares.

But the thing's existence-in-itself as life's immediate objectification is precisely that of will, but a will offered to an impersonal subject, a will-less subject. Thus the exchange of roles, or rather of metaphysical determinations, between representation and will is complete: originally inherent in and identical to representation's structure, individuality is now will's. One frees oneself from individuality by freeing oneself from will, by giving oneself over to the pure light of impersonal knowledge whose benefits Schopenhauer abruptly begins to praise after having described the movement of esthetic experience as that by which "we . . . devote the whole power of our mind to perception, sink ourselves completely therein. . . . We lose ourselves entirely . . . we forget *our individuality, our will*, and continue to exist only as pure subject, as clear mirror of the object" (1, 178; my emphasis). And after stressing the suppression of "individuality in the knowing subject" (1, 169), Schopenhauer concludes his analysis as follows: "In the aesthetic method of consideration we found two inseparable constituent parts: namely, knowledge of the object not as individual thing, but as Platonic Idea, in other words, as persistent form of this whole species of things; and the self-consciousness of the knower, *not as individual, but as pure, will-less subject of knowledge*" (1, 195; my emphasis).

The incoherence of these positions is hardly attenuated by observing the modification, or actual doubling, that comes to affect

Schopenhauer's concept of representation precisely when the question of aesthetic experience arises: alongside the spatio-temporally defined "phenomena," the Idea is juxtaposed as a sort of archetype indifferent to individuals, who are its monotonous reproduction. Undoubtedly the Idea remains subordinate to the "most universal form, namely that of the representation in general," which consists of "being object for a subject" (I, 175), but it escapes the "subordinate" forms, which alone express the "principle of sufficient reason" or principle of individuation. "It is the forms subordinate to this . . . which multiply the Idea in particular and fleeting individuals" (I, 175), just as it is these forms that make the subject's knowledge an individual knowledge. Individuality of phenomena and individuality of the knowing subject, therefore, reside exclusively in the *principium individuationis*, and it is conceivable that being foreign to these secondary forms of space, time, and causality, and assuming no "other form peculiar to knowledge . . . except that of the representation in general" (I, 175), the immediate objectification of Will in Idea ignores all individuality, whether that of knowing subject, as pure impersonal mirror of the object, or that of the Idea. It is significant, then, that the redemptive experience of beauty abolishes both the multiplicity of individuals, prey to will's absurd battles within them, and Will itself. But if we leave the blissful contemplation of Ideas and return to will, it might well be asked why will itself is marked with the seal of individuality in the same way as those phenomena. How can individuality attain noumenal reality if it can be explained only by sensible intuition's forms and is inherent to them?

This is perhaps the moment to recall what we said about the philosophical tradition's indetermination concerning ego and more precisely, the essence of ipseity. The uncertainty testified to by Schopenhauer's thought is only one among many consequences of Descartes's strange silence (at the very moment he placed it, unnoticed, at the center of culture's becoming) concerning this essential problem. For the question of individuality, in its radicalness, does not differ from the question of ipseity; it aims at and is identical to the same essence. That is why we must first raise the strongest doubts con-

cerning the possibility of explaining something like an individual on the basis of representation's forms and its ultimate foundation, the world's ek-static structure. If the individual draws its essence from and is possible only through ipseity's Self, as has been shown, ipseity's essence must reside in life's original self-affection, absolutely exclusive of ek-stasis. And then the very pretension of basing individuality on representation and its forms becomes immediately absurd.

Let us consider more attentively Husserl's account of individuality based on temporal position, an account that benefits from nascent phenomenology's extraordinary contribution to the concept of time. This problematic becomes explicit when one tries to explain the possibility of objective time, how in the universal flux of immanent phenomenological data a fixed, objective, and identical order can be instituted. Take the example of a continuing tonal impression (an example that facilitates "reduction"; i.e., the bracketing of transcendent apprehensions). The original phase, in which that impression is born, constantly changes into a "just-passed" phase, and a new phase constantly arises. But whereas what was the original phase slips into the past and gets further and further from us, it remains "the same," with the same impressional content, the same temporal position (it always precedes the phase that follows it, always follows the phase that precedes it), and it is viewed as self-identical while it continues to sink into the past. The tonal phase's "remaining self-identical" is the object of an intention, a significance we attach to it in our representation (even though this representation is "immanent," bearing on the sensible content and bracketing the transcendent object it is supposed to represent) while it sinks into the ever more distant past, eventually sinking into "unconsciousness."

But the representation (the intention) of the phase as irreducibly self-identical, far from establishing that identity, presupposes it. Only because the phase-in-itself is self-identical (ultimately, because it is a Self), slipping and yet held by retention, can it be represented as self-identical throughout its slippage. Thus the real problem of its individuality occurs and must be solved at the level of the original impression, the *Urimpression*. But the original impression (of the tone,

for example) is “absolutely unaltered,” which means precisely that it hasn’t yet submitted to retentional modification, that the first ekstastic dehiscence, the slipping into the “just past,” hasn’t yet affected it. Thus it is entirely present, or better yet, “living,” and in this position is so strongly marked with individuality that it never loses that mark throughout its slippage into the past.

What constitutes this original mark of individuality? Not the content of the impression but the fact that the impression is experienced now, absolutely—it and no other. The now, as source and definition of an absolute temporal position, individualizes the impression absolutely, and another now—the following, for example—will individualize another impression: “The same sensation now and in another now has a difference, in fact, a phenomenological difference which corresponds to the absolute temporal position. This difference is the primal source of the individuality of the ‘this’ and therewith of the absolute temporal position.”³ And again: “The tonal point in its absolute individuality is retained in its matter and temporal position, the latter first constituting individuality.”

But why does the now individualize? Why is that now, as a pure temporal position (bracketing its content, the impression’s variable content), nevertheless tied to impression? Why does the demonstration of individualization by the now occur precisely in relation to impression, *original* impression, instead of in relation to a stick, ideology, or equation? And why, if what individualizes is a pure temporal position, does the now get invoked instead of the “just past,” the past in general, or the future? The reason for this is that the now furnishes the foundation and source of all possible individuation solely because its essence is also that of ipseity, of life, that self-impression in which alone impression is possible as an originally living impression, so that in the self-impression that constitutes all original presence no dehiscence occurs, neither that of the past (not even the “just past”) nor that of the future. In the radical immanence of that living presence there is no form separate from and opposed to content but only that content’s own self-presence as self-affection.

It is significant, returning now to Schopenhauer, to see that the

double regime established concerning the concept of will in relation to its individuality (or nonindividuality) obeys the prescriptions that have just been indicated. As long as will is considered an ontic reality and finally as a fact, without inquiring about its final possibility as force, then thought easily slips from “the” will to the idea of a unique and universal principle of things whose plurality is attributed to the intuitive structure of space and time, that is, in the final analysis to ekstastic explosion, while the designation “external,” attached to each of the elements proceeding from that infinitely repeated excluding of reality from self, really makes it an individual entity if not entirely an individual. Only when will is bound to the original appearance that determines it as will-to-live and mode of life does its individuality, until then unperceived and even negated, surface “at the bottom of the immediate consciousness of the individual”—as can be seen in the many above-mentioned texts that bind will and the individual and oppose them both to representation as esthetic contemplation, as pure essence of light, “the most delightful of things” (I, 203), suddenly relieved of individuality’s torments.

This finally admitted recognition of will’s individuality is essential. It alone makes possible the doctrine’s great analyses (of egoism, cruelty, pity) and lends them their seriousness. The theory of egoism repeats the contradictions of Schopenhauer’s thought and in a way, takes them to their limit. This theory is based on both the thesis of the *principium individuationis*, which makes individuality a simple appearance and consequence of representation, and the contrary thesis, which makes the individual and will-in-itself identical. Because space and time are the forms of representation, the single, united will, as representing and manifesting itself in representation, must “manifest itself in the plurality of individuals” (I, 331), so that this plurality never attains will’s being-in-itself whose essence remains completely in-itself and indivisible. At this point a dissymmetry arises, quickly taking effect, between the will that contains its entire being in itself and wills everything, the hungry will that knows only its own desire and gives into it without reservations, and on the other hand the world of appearances that floats before it, all the things that *are*

merely for it, ready to be delivered to it, to be ground up by it, simple means for its conservation and growth.

What such a description lacks, as a description of egoism, is the individual, a real individual, not one that comes from dissemination in space or time, a mere individuation of a part exterior to all the others, but the individual that coincides with will's being-in-itself and infinite will. For if individuality appears only in representation, it is merely the individuality of things, and in any case is illusory: by destroying it, will merely destroys an appearance, and the battle is not serious. Section 61 of the *World* speaks of the battle of individuals between themselves as a real battle, the *bellum omnium contra omnes*. But in that battle, not only are (apparent) individuals beaten, mutilated, used, and finally annihilated; it is also an individual who beats, mutilates, uses, and kills. The will that wants everything, that ravages the earth and treats things and others as simple means, is always an individual will. Solely in the coincidence of each individual with will's entire essence is egoism possible.

Section 61 testifies clearly to the slippage that progressively displaces the individuality of representation to that of will and that correlatively makes will not an impersonal principle but an always individual will, thrown along with its infinite force against all the others in whom that same force lives. After having declared that the phenomenal plurality of individuals does not concern will and leaves it intact in its infinite and indivisible essence, after having reaffirmed that will resides only in reality's defining essence, the text abruptly designates the individual as the site of will's self-discovery of its self-being, a discovery that engages it in the ever-accelerating process of its destructive desire: "But this inner nature itself, and hence what is actually real, [will] finds immediately only in its inner self. Therefore *everyone wants everything for himself, wants to possess*, or at least control, *everything*, and would like to destroy whatever opposes him" (1, 332; my emphasis).

In man, will is joined with intelligence, with a gaze that takes everything that is not itself, individuals included, simply as its object, existing only for it, disappearing if it was to disappear itself. But only

because that gaze is for-itself the only gaze (thus because of its immediation and ipseity), only because will belongs to an individual and that individual entirely identifies with will can Schopenhauer write: "Every knowing individual is therefore in truth, and finds himself as, the whole will-to-live" (1, 332). Here the gaze is solely that of will; the "subject" of representation and the "subject" of will coincide in the individual, who is nothing but their original appearance to and in themselves, their ipseity and life's essence in them. "Therefore, whereas each individual is immediately given to himself as the whole will and the entire representer, all others are given to him in the first instance only as his representations. Hence for him his own inner being and its preservation come before all others taken together" (1, 332). And indeed this explains egoism's singularity, "that every individual, completely vanishing and reduced to nothing in a boundless world, nevertheless makes himself the centre of the world, and considers his own existence and well-being before everything else" (1, 332). All of this, however, is true only on one condition: *that individuality be the immanent experience of reality instead of its illusory representation*.

Many other difficulties help change Schopenhauer's thought and render it uncertain if not contradictory. We have already alluded to the fluctuation of the (nonetheless essential) concept of objectification, which most often signifies the appearance of representation, in the sense of a presentation in and by exteriority of the already self-existent but that sometimes signifies a sort of real creation called up to give actual consistency to what would otherwise be deprived of it. This ambiguity is especially apparent in the matter of will's double objectification, depending on whether its representational form is complete or incomplete. In its complete form, whose essence is found in the *principium individuationis*, will's objectification ends in the efflorescent multiplicity of its individual representations, which, thanks to representation's derealizing function, correspond to as many illusions, closely related to dreams. In the incomplete ("the most general") form of representation, which consists solely of the subject-object opposition, excluding the *principium individuationis*, will's ob-

jectification causes the appearance of the universe of Ideas, which are the womb of creatures and things, and which, designing the molds and forms according to which will-to-live is eternally accomplished, seem to compose the world's infinitely real structure. "The will, in the original act of its objectification, determines the different Ideas in which it objectifies itself, in other words, the different forms of natural existence of every kind" (I, 159). The aesthetic experience opens that first structuring of the real to us, not as a unity of illusions but as will's "most *adequate objectivity* possible" (I, 175), which, allowing us to understand the secret of the universe, prepares to detach us from it. One can claim the following ground for the reality of the world of Ideas: that just as for will itself, it surpasses all grounds.⁴ In conformity with the division of its concept (a division, however, that is produced in the sphere of representation), objectification (of will) sometimes means transformation into actual existence, sometimes, on the contrary, the arrival of appearance, the deployment of Maya's veil.

This ambiguity is not accidental. It brings us to the central lacuna in Schopenhauer's philosophy around which all the others circulate: the absence (or indeed, negation) of any positive phenomenological status of the concept of will. On the one hand, immediate knowledge is the principle and foundation of all mediate knowledge. The inner experience of will, its original appearance as immanent body, makes us experience the world of representation as a world of appearances and at the same time makes us understand those appearances as manifestations of will, as its phenomena. Representation's other, its wholly other, gives us the key to representation. Schopenhauer is precisely the thinker who, radically questioning the concept of being's essence as representivity, opens the way to a philosophy of life, a life that he understands as will and will-to-live. On the other hand, however, if the way to life is not representation, what can it be? What original mode of revelation can present life to us in and as itself? And more profoundly, in what way will this mode in and by itself constitute life's essence?

Schopenhauer has no answer to this question. When his efforts to seize its being at the depths of the individual body have failed and

will-in-itself is handed over to the unconscious, he must gather what knowledge he can from representation. After having demanded the secret of representation's world from will, representation is proposed as the only possible testimony to the reality of will. "The sole self-knowledge of the will as a whole is the representation as a whole, the whole world of perception" (I, 165). "The will, considered purely in itself, is devoid of knowledge, and is only a blind, irresistible urge. . . . Through the addition of the world as representation, developed for its service, the will obtains knowledge of its own willing and what it wills, namely that this is nothing but this world" (I, 275). Thus is born what became the paradox of modern thought: the more representation is criticized and contested in its pretension to equal reality and its ability to make reality, and the more our epoch defines itself against representation, increasingly understanding itself as the "era of suspicion," the more the empire of that same representation expands to include everything and the more it appears as the principle of all knowledge, hence of all possible salvation. This is because more than ever, at the very moment it seems to be called into question, it continues to constitute the unique essence of manifestation and being. Thus an astonishing reversal of values occurs, which concludes with Freudianism: calling representation into question ends in establishing its absolute dictatorship.

Nevertheless, Schopenhauer upset this dictatorship, not only by contesting representation's ability to represent reality but by opposing it, not with some mysterious X, but with what he calls will or force. And in this way, *The World as Will and Representation* breaks ground for an entirely new thought. For we have shown that the opposition of force to representation ceases to be naive and precritical when behind force itself the outline of a more ultimate question makes itself felt, the question of force's final essence, the appearing that makes it possible as force, an appearing that is precisely life. At that moment, the thought of representation and ek-stasis, which serves as its support, totters on its foundation because along with the concept of appearance, the concept of being itself begins to tremble. In any case, what Schopenhauer disallows and definitively excludes (not at

the historical level, which according to him infinitely repeats the same errors, but in regard to essences, the original possibilities and impossibilities they control) is an insidious attempt to erase force's irreducibility and the unthinkable field it deploys. This insidious attempt is made precisely by reducing force and its field to representation, *by making force's movement the movement of representation itself*.

Leibniz made a similar attempt, to which Heidegger pays indulgent attention. Once again it is nominally a matter of denouncing representivity's reign by showing how it determines Leibniz's conception of force. At the same time, however, and more subtly, force's originality is negated by the explicit and deliberate integration with representation, which despite everything, inscribes itself in the history of being and has its ultimate origin in *physis*—so that finally the presuppositions of Greek society, despite (and because of) their alteration, reign over the whole of “Western metaphysics,” reducing every form of being to them, to ek-stasis. From the beginning, Leibniz's conception is situated in the continuation of the cogito (reduced to “I represent”) and described as its avatar. It is a matter of understanding the new essence of reality that resides, as we have seen, in representivity, in a *sub-jectum* whose actual reality consists of the representing that holds each of the beings in being: “The *actualitas* of this *subiectum* [man] has its essence in the *actus* of *cogitare* (*percipere*).”⁵ At the moment when the *actus* is that of the *percipere*, it becomes evident that all action is reduced to representation. Since self-actualization is really that of representing, it is not the actualization of something but a self-actualization, “in itself related to itself,”⁶ and that is because representation is not only a representation of something but mainly, although only implicitly as we have explained in detail, a self-representation. One can then write: “Every actualizing (*Wirken*) is an actualization which brings itself about. By bringing something before itself each time, it accomplishes a presentation and thus represents what is actualized in a certain way. Actualizing is in itself a representing (*percipere*).”⁷

Leibniz adds two traits to the Cartesian perception to make it more clearly a self-actualization: unification and appetite. Since

perception according to Leibniz is merely the expression of the multiple in the one, the monad, endowed with and defined by perception, is in-itself the original unification that “presents the manifold to itself, and has the essence of its self-containedness, its constancy, that is, its reality in this presenting representation itself.”⁸ Since the unification that acts in the monad constitutes and determines the monad's *actualitas* as a self-actualization, that self-actualization designates nothing but the essence of representation and as such is identical to an *actio*, to that *actio* that constitutes and determines its *actualitas* as an actual reality. Additionally, the *multum* that the unifying representation dis-poses before itself is not just any *multum* but an essentially limited one, the world, but represented from each monad's particular point of view. Because each representation represents the universe from only one point of view in the concentration corresponding to that point of view, each representation is inhabited by a specific appetite that carries its relationship to the universe beyond its own world: “A[n appetitive] progression driving beyond itself is thus active in representation,” in virtue of which every representation is essentially “transitional.”⁹

Henceforth, at the heart of each representation, because of its finitude, because in fact of the finitude of ek-stasis, a self-surpassing movement occurs, an action, if you will, through which each perception continually tends to change into a greater and more comprehensive one, so that this movement (which to a certain extent prefigures the intentional surpassing inherent in Husserlian consciousness) presents itself as endless. Thus, movement or action (which differ completely from representation, taking their original possibility from an appearance that is innocent and radically exclusive of all ek-stasis) are, on the contrary, brought back to and explained by a character of representation. “This striving [or appetite],” writes Heidegger, “is the fundamental characteristic of actualizing in the sense of representing.”¹⁰ And in fact section 15 of the *Monadology* declares: “The action of the internal principle, which causes the change of the passage from one perception to another, may be called *appetition*; it is true that desire cannot always completely attain to the whole percep-

tion to which it tends, but it always attains something of it and reaches new perceptions."¹¹ *Action's inner principle is therefore merely the action of the inner principle of representations*, a principle by which representations constantly change into different ones, a principle of "representative appetite." In conformity with this principle, appetite and representation (*perceptio*) are not two distinct realities, not even two dissociable characters, but the single essence of reality as efficacious, actualizing reality, consisting of the self-actualization of self-representation. "*Perceptio* and *appetitus* are not two determinations of the reality of what is real which are first produced. Rather their essential unity constitutes the simplicity of what is truly one, and thus its unity and its beingness."¹²

Can it be said that this movement, in which each representation is an appetite (*Anstrebung*), an effort toward a more comprehensive unification of the multiple, is really representation's movement, given as such, with no claim to reduce every species of movement, every possible force, and even less the essence of such force, to itself? On the contrary, it is precisely the essence of force in general that Leibniz intends to circumscribe in the changing of representations. Section 12 of the *Monadology* affirms: "And one can say generally that force is nothing other than the principle of change"¹³—and Heidegger comments as follows: "'Change' does not mean here any kind of becoming-different in general, but rather the transitional essence of striving [or appetitive] representation."¹⁴

Not only does representation's appetite, and consequently its essence, define the essence of force, but in doing so, it defines the essence of reality in general as efficient reality and as such the being of every possible being. "Leibniz calls the principle of beings as such: *vis*, *la force*, force. The essence of force is not determined by the retroactive generalization of something actualizing which we experience somewhere, but the other way around: the essence of force is the original essence of the beingness of beings."¹⁵

Since it constitutes the being of every possible being, force designates the essence of subjectivity,¹⁶ which since Descartes has become the essence of subjectivity. But that force, now proposed as the foun-

dation of all things, is nothing but and nothing more than the movement of perception: "Every *subiectum* is determined in its *esse* by *vis* (*perceptio-appetitus*)."¹⁷ And force, far from opening a new dimension of being, is as "appetition" reduced to the essence of representation and its inoffensive movement: "Together with the universality of the representational essence of reality, the fundamental characteristic of representing."¹⁸

So we can now see the extent of the extraordinary rupture in the history of Greek truth, accomplished by a thought that no longer sought the foundation of reality in representation or its ultimate ecstatic support but in their rejection. By rejecting representation as much as he could, opening the way to a philosophy of life, Schopenhauer inevitably raised many essential and new questions, which must now be the object of a more radical elucidation.

6

Life and Its Properties: Repression

Life, then, means two things: it means will, the will-to-live, a goalless, objectless, endless desire and its infinite reiteration; but on the other hand, as we have tried to indicate, this concept of life, from which Schopenhauer stubbornly deduces grandiose, tragic implications, remains affected by a theoretical naiveté. Far from accounting for and thematizing life's essence, this first concept does not even consider it. For one cannot simply affirm that life is a hungry, constantly active will—or any other mode of existence that the problematic tends to privilege. It must first be shown how will, for example, belongs to life, how it is alive. Self-affection, independent of the difference between “subject and object,” between “knower and known,” independent of Difference as such, constitutes life's essence in will or in any other determination containing that original essence. In radical opposition to the ontic and precritical concept of life as will, it is therefore necessary to pose the ontological concept in virtue of which that will is something instead of nothing, in the immanence of the primordial suffering that makes it a living will.

We are beginning to understand how Schopenhauer's thought, before Nietzsche's, unfolds its risky affirmations in a movement be-

tween these two concepts of life. For the unity of life and will is constantly disintegrating. Life, whose inner possibility is attained by rejecting representivity and whose site, in post-Kantian philosophy, is the thing-in-itself (namely will, with which it is then identified), does not proffer its essence for long. This is because life is not a mysterious *X*, the object of who-knows-what calculation. It is manifestation, the first thing and the actuality of a presence. It is what will wills since will, as Kantian thing-in-itself, is still unconscious. *Will wills life; that is, its manifestation.* And in a metaphysics that rejects representation only to posit the unconscious, it wills the only manifestation it knows, the only subsistent manifestation, manifestation in the world, representation: “And as what the will wills is always life, just because this is nothing but the presentation of that willing for the representation,” it follows that “life, the visible world, the phenomenon, is only the mirror of the will,” that “this world will accompany the will as inseparably as a body is accompanied by its shadow,” and that “if will exists, then life, the world, will exist” (1, 275).

Reality was understood by Schopenhauer as a hungry reality, a reality that contains its own lack of reality. What such a hunger, such a lack, means is suddenly made clear at the same time that the will-to-live unveils its true essence. What it lacks is appearance, without which no reality can lift itself out of nothingness, without which it is not even a fiction, not even a shadow. Schopenhauer's hunger and thirst come from the German beginnings, in Boehme and Schelling, of everything that obscure in itself rises and strives toward light to find being. Terrible must be the tension of what strives toward its own existence, terrible the will of will-to-live, if it is true that what is at stake is its own possibility of being, will's own ability to live. But just as in the field opened by Western metaphysics, with its origin in Greek truth, here too, the only recognized mode of manifestation is ek-static, which after its Kantian elaboration becomes the essence of representation—representivity. So too, will seeks its own manifestation, its own ability to live, in representivity. It seeks life in a luminous center where life is necessarily absent. More terrible than will's tension toward the actuality of its own life is the inevitability of its

failure since will-to-live stubbornly insists on seeking life where there is none. Schopenhauer's pessimism is secretly augmented by the ontological error that he neither inaugurates nor terminates. Desire's infinite recommencement, as will's effort toward a reality that cannot occur in the field of its opening to the world, and the repetition connected with the failure that such a project is bound to run up against, whose motivation is located in the final structures of being, are continually adduced by the author of *The World as Will and Representation* as proof of his theory of will-to-live, whereas they are really nothing more than philosophical nonsense.

The separation of will and life runs throughout Schopenhauer's text. It can be recognized in that, for will, the fact of willing, of self-affirmation, is not limited to the immanent use of its essence but consists of its manifestation, which is conceived precisely as its objectification in the form of a world; and this manifestation, which is a representation, is life. "The will affirms itself; this means that while *in its objectivity*, that is to say, *in the world and in life*, its own inner nature is completely and distinctly given to it as representation" (1, 285; my emphasis).¹ So life cashes itself out for a world of appearances whose proliferation and continual renewal are the signs of that relentless will searching for an existence, that is, precisely for the manifestation it lacks. Elsewhere, Schopenhauer says, "The will-to-live presses impetuously into existence under millions of forms" (2, 350). Will is always described as attachment to life, not founded in its object, life, but in the subject who experiences that attachment (cf. 2, 239), in will, which in-itself lacks reality. Will's attachment to life is identical to its adhesion to body. The generative organs are will's headquarters; the sexual needs and all the others express the will-to-live's ceaseless claim on us, obsessive witnesses to its thirst for existence.

However, will's immanence in body, or their identity, which makes the first book's original approach so profound, is incompatible with the thesis that forces will, abandoned to the unconscious, to seek its phenomenal reality outside itself, precisely in the body, but a body that now belongs to representation's sphere, to life's "world." Thus occurs the crucial displacement, as noted above, of the body's status,

while the affirmation of will shows its ambiguity. It is as if at a given moment will's affirmation were no longer its self-affirmation or, in relation to the body, the setting in motion of its powers and their free play, the self-willed unchaining of appetites and needs. A sort of pure act of will is now superimposed on the body, life, and their desires, a pure willing that can invest itself in and assent to them but also refuse them. Between that act and its bodily manifestation a space is introduced, a difference, a contradiction, "a contradiction by the will of its own phenomenon" (1, 334). This is representation's space, as is proved by will's fragmenting process, inherent in the *principium individuationis*, co-constitutive of all representation as such: "The will manifests that *self-affirmation* of one's own body in innumerable individuals" (1, 334).

Thus life ceases to coincide with and define itself by will. Instead it becomes will's object, the object of will's affirmation, that life "the willing or not willing of which is the great question" (1, 308). The same is true of the body. From the interval between will and life are born the ethical categories: right and wrong or rather good and evil.² Life is bad because it proposes itself as the tireless repetition of a desire that never attains its goal; it is the body, traversed and laminated by the desire that will hound it to its grave. But the real evil consists of life's affirmation. By clinging to his miserable body, the evildoer is the very one who says yes to his drives: "the strength with which the wicked person affirms life" (1, 367). Such is the foundation of injustice, the fact that the evildoer "not only affirms the will-to-live as it appears in his own body, but in this affirmation goes so far as to deny the will that appears in other individuals" (1, 362). Salvation, on the other hand, consists in refusing life, that cause of the individual's perpetual unhappiness, which then infects the entire environment since the affirmation of life in one individual inevitably brings about its wreckage in others.

As is easily seen, such a conversion has its condition of possibility in the widening gap between will and life, allowing the former to stop willing the latter: "The will now turns away from life" (1, 379). Here again, the true meaning of such a gap must be demonstrated.

The detachment it promotes is not an ethical concept but the unfolding of the phenomenological distance through which will gives itself to itself in the aspect of life. This self-seeing, in the form life-seeing, makes possible a non-will-to-live, the reversal of will itself. As in classical philosophies, just as in the Freudianism that follows them, salvation is accomplished through knowledge, which consists in representation, in reflection—two things that are really one since for Schopenhauer, representation of the world is merely will's self-representation, that is, its own reflection. It is always a matter of fortifying "the knowledge of the real world . . . that such knowledge may become the final quieter of the will." And again: "Only in consequence of this knowledge can the will abolish itself. . . . Nature *leads the will to the light* just because only in the light can it find its salvation" (1, 400; my emphasis).

A subtle slip, however, occurs in this description of salvation. Will is supposed to deny life, to break with its attachment to the body, but the body and life are merely the representation and phenomenal accomplishment of will. For will to stop willing life really means to stop willing itself, to stop willing. Thus, after stating that "will now turns away from life" and that this presupposes will's turning away from itself, its self-negation, the text adds: "Will turns about; it no longer affirms its own inner nature, mirrored in the phenomenon, but denies it" (1, 380). In the same passage, the "horror" of life and its pleasures becomes, for the ascetic, a horror of will itself: "the will, of which self-knowledge has conceived a horror" (1, 382). The analysis of chastity clearly shows that the suspension of bodily needs is merely will's self-suppression: "[Chastity] announces that the will, whose phenomenon is the body, suppresses itself (*sich aufhebt*) with the life of this body" (1, 380; translation modified).

At this point the purely apparent, illusory nature of the opposition of life and will becomes obvious since every action upon life is equally an action upon will, every action of life equally one of will. The opposition of life and will is knowledge; its appearance is knowledge's appearance and illusion. Can this powerless appearance deliver us from life and will itself, from the essence and foundation of all

possible power? Schopenhauer's philosophy encounters the paradox that in one way or another haunts every thought it gave birth to: to separate life and representation radically as reality and unreality, and yet to expect the second to act on the first, even to transform it completely. In fact, one of *The World as Will and Representation's* great themes and contributions is to affirm the primacy of life and its determination of every form of knowledge, so that knowledge can never be anything more than life's "valet," an agency charged with justifying, not inventing, life's enterprises. The critique of an ethics that has its locus outside of life and is given the task of assigning external norms and commandments to life is presented as one of many consequences of this general critique of knowledge: "No system of ethics which would mould and improve the will itself is possible. For all teaching affects only *knowledge*, and knowledge never determines the will itself" (2, 223).

These difficulties lead to a radical elucidation of the relationship between will and life. The guiding thread of such an elucidation, beyond all the doctrine's contradictions, is its crucial intuition—the opposition of the necessary reality and essence of all things to representability and, based on this opposition, the inner understanding of that reality. Whatever deploys its essence independent of representation (independent of the ecstatic dimension that gives representation its light) remains in itself, in its radical immanence. And what remains in itself is Life. The stone does not remain in itself, nor do any of the other beings, nor does the being of those beings; that is, their mode of being based on being as their a priori condition of possibility. The a priori possibility of beings is their ability to be represented, which refers back to the exteriorization of ek-stasis and finally to the original eclosion of *physis* from which it derives. Being, considered in itself, can *be* only as life. Schopenhauer's first aim is not will but what escapes from and is incompatible with all representivity and thus constitutes being itself—movement or life.

We have shown why what escapes from all representivity is thought to be will and why it lets itself be grasped as will-to-live, as hunger and need: Schopenhauer, incapable of assigning a rigorous

phenomenological status to what he understood as reality's essence, incapable of thinking appearance's primordial essence in its antecedence to representivity, found himself faced with his philosophy's bastard central concept, a reality without reality, a life that does not experience itself and is not life, namely, "will-to-live," the inextinguishable need for a revelation it no longer constitutes in and by itself and which it therefore demands from the "world."³

Thus, not will but its precondition constitutes the central element of Schopenhauer's discovery. That precondition, life's essence, is immanence. Will's immanence determines it completely and determines its irreducible opposition to representivity. Will's immanence makes it reality—as long as it does not fall to the level of will-to-live, seeking its reality in the world of unreality—and at the same time disqualifies that world. Each of the system's previously noted themes receives its secret light from this immanence. Schopenhauer generally interprets will as endless desire. This is not simply because as will-to-live it tries in vain to fulfill itself, never coming to the end of its efforts but in a more original way, because it has no end, in the sense of a goal. And it has no goal because entirely self-actualizing and self-contained, it cannot represent any goal or establish any distance between itself and its goal, namely, itself. Will's relationship with itself, its primal being as immanence, is the foundation of those too easily accepted assertions.

Thus Schopenhauer's other thesis, that will is empty and goalless, must be understood as it was by Nietzsche—turned inside out. That will is empty means it is full; possessing length, width, height, and depth, it fills its whole being. Nowhere and at no moment does it lift itself above itself, nor does it deploy beyond itself the vacuity of any space. That will is empty means, because it accomplishes no ek-stasis and projects no representation before its gaze, that it wills nothing, no goal; it pursues no end; no motive or reason determines it. Will is empty, not because its gaze is empty but because it has no gaze. That is why the beings that inhabit will, "independent of all knowledge," "exhibit themselves not as drawn from the front, but as driven from behind" (II, 352). These beings can also be people: "Only apparently

are people drawn from in front; in reality they are pushed from behind. It is not life that entices them on, but want and trouble that drive them forward" (2, 360). As immanence, life's original meaning is so unheard of, so foreign to representivity, that Schopenhauer cannot help interpreting it according to representivity. In representation's open space, anyone who moves according to a nonrepresentative principle is like a drunken fool: "Driven forward against his will, everyone bears himself as best he can, and the resultant perplexity and embarrassment often present a ludicrous effect" (2, 360).

However, despite its inability to represent anything whatsoever, or rather because of it, because of its radical immanence, will is entirely in itself, entirely itself. It never stops being what it is; it never stops willing. In an essential proposition, Schopenhauer says, "*The affirmation of the will* is the persistent willing itself" (1, 326). Severed from every reference to the world, from every reference to beings and their being, delivered over to itself, will is nothing but its own essence. It accomplishes only what its essence accomplishes. It wills infinitely, inexorably. It is "untiring" (2, 211), "an untiring mechanism" (2, 358), and since it constitutes the being of reality, the being of all being, "every being wills incessantly" (2, 215). The irreducibility of this drive, its ignorance of the entire world, the fact that it "does not have its sufficient ground or reason in the external world" (2, 358), determine it as "a blind urge, an impulse wholly without ground and motive" (2, 357) and finally as an action that draws its principle solely from itself, totally indifferent to anything but itself.

Thus too is explained will's terrible nature, the way it, like Nietzsche's joyously ravaging mighty horde, rushes into the universe for which it cares nothing because it contains not the least morsel of that universe, because it contains no representation. Schopenhauer described the existence that draws its inner determination from will as a sort of alternation between the proliferation of cares, which leave only to be replaced by others, and boredom, a boredom so unsupportable that falling back into preoccupation and its endless interplay seems infinitely preferable. But we have already discovered the principle of boredom's deadly emptiness, which is also the principle of its

Nietzschean reversal as ineffable plenitude: it expresses nothing but will's original precondition, incompatible with all representivity, nothing but its immanence.

With the recognition of will's original essence as immanence, philosophy of life makes one of its major discoveries—the status of action and its true possibility. It is true that action, like all that exists, takes its possibility solely from being. As long as being is interpreted in the light of Greek truth, as *ek-stasis*, the being of action itself is ultimately and inevitably understood in that same way. Action is a pro-duction.⁴ To pro-duce the silver cup spoken of by Aristotle, for instance, is to respond to what the cup is, there, before us, ready to be offered in sacrifice. To pro-duce means to cause something to come into presence, to lead it toward its appearance, to let it advance into coming. To make the essence of pro-duction understood, Heidegger quotes the *Symposium* (205b), where Plato says, "Every occasion for whatever passes over and goes forward into presencing from that which is not presencing is *poiēsis*, is bringing-forth [*Her-vor-bringen*]."⁵ Pro-duction therefore means to make something pass from non-presence into presence. But presence is *ek-static*, and that is why it is accomplished as a passage from its opposite, from non-presence. The *Essence of Reasons* says it more precisely: "This 'bringing [or 'pro-ducing'] itself before itself' of world."⁶ In the end, action is the action of *physis* itself, eclosion.

In their radicalness, such presuppositions do not dominate Greek or Heideggerian thought alone. The metaphysics of representation also arises from thought. In the modern world, the ecstatic conception of action becomes representivity's explanation of action. To act is not only the posing of ends, of goals, the dis-posing of means, that is, always self-representing, throwing-before-self, basing what needs to be done on self, but in regard to the doing itself and what must be done an actualizing of it, a leading it into existence, precisely into being ob-jected. Action, not only in its tenants and attempts but in itself, is an ob-jectification, the process of representation. It is only because action's being has already been reduced to representation's that in return, representation—the cogito's "I represent," for exam-

ple—can be understood as an action or that the movement of Leibnizian action can be understood as the movement and essence of real action, as the essence of force.

Schopenhauer, insofar as his "will" is *an action without representation*, radically reverses the presuppositions that form the mute foundation of all idealism. In fact, this reversal is so radical, so difficult to envision, that the author of *World* takes it up twice to accomplish it. At first representationless action can only be "blind," and because representation is the site of all dis-position and organization, the site in which ends and means, coordinates and directions, take place, it can be only aberrant action—so that the one who acts, pushed from behind by will without being pulled from ahead by the representation of an end or goal, without being able to pose its landmarks before itself, thrashes about like a jumping jack, producing, as Schopenhauer says, "a ludicrous effect."

Indeed, it is important to see just how much is excluded from action's sphere by this bracketing of representivity. Since this sphere is now that of immanent action, which exceeds itself in nothing and no project precedes or enlightens, it excludes not only all finality in general (i.e., precisely the insertion of representation into will) but also the most current practical pretension of arriving at some "assurance" or "insurance," which would finally amount to certainty, inevitably understood as the pursuit and capture of some self-evident "fact" or the teleological accomplishment of representative, intentional consciousness. But now, deprived of this and everything founded on it, deprived of every possible form of knowledge, will acts alone. Its action is the simple inner actualization of an essence ignorant of the world.

But—and this is the second moment of Schopenhauer's reversal, which opens the royal road to a philosophy of life, especially Nietzsche's, although action is now defined as foreign to light and *ek-stasis*, ignorant of the world and all that goes on in it, including the obstacles it will encounter and since it cannot see them, inevitably break itself upon—this blind action succeeds! It is sure, certain, and greater yet, infallible. It is so perfect in and by itself, in its indifference to any

calculation or computation, any rational evaluation or knowledge, that the intrusion of any of these gravely upsets its exercise: "With the appearance of reason, this certainty and infallibility of the will's [immediate] manifestations . . . are almost entirely lost" (I, 151). Will without reason, action without representation, is instinct. The term *instinct* does not merely designate such a process externally and a posteriori; in its semantic charge, it carries the astonishment that a blind yet successful comportment is bound to arouse, the prestige that hovers about it: "instinct's surety," its "infallibility" and "mystery."

In the tide of post-Schopenhauerian thought, it was Eduard von Hartmann, in his famous *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, who held forth most smugly on instinct's miraculous nature, celebrating the astonishing activity that toils throughout us and the universe, profusely thanking its author, the Almighty, God . . . the Unconscious! How significant it is to see the new idol of modern times make its entry under the aspect of that majestic personage. And lined up before it, so many gaping, disconcerted spectators, ecstatic admirers of the marvelous, as well as its grumpy detractors—all the believers who, though approaching it from such a strange angle, hoped to recover their lost God, the scientists, delighted to hear evil spoken of their oldest enemy, consciousness (which was, however, responsible for all their work), but simultaneously furious to see their other adversary, whose case they thought they had closed long ago, re-emerge. (That is why, they remarked, instinct's phenomena must be reduced to their proper proportions; they are, after all, objective phenomena, which science explains, or will explain, according to its laws and therefore the opposite of a miracle. Besides, instinct is hardly infallible; it is often wrong; the sphex wasp, for example . . .) And following this wild crowd, the mass of budding psychoanalysts, trying to distinguish themselves: Bravo for the unconscious, but ours is totally different from Hartmann's! Even though Hartmann had problematized nothing less than Schopenhauer's will, whose status, according to Freud himself, defined that of the instincts: "the great

thinker Schopenhauer, whose unconscious 'Will' is equivalent to mental instincts of psycho-analysis."⁷

But who is saying this? To whom does this action, beyond the sphere of knowledge, ignorant of its means and goals, appear blind, unconscious, and catastrophic? To thought, which situates the possibility of being in representability. To whom does this blind action (ignorant of its means and goals), if it succeeds, appear miraculous? To that same thought. Schopenhauer's thought is essentially the same as Hartmann's. Schopenhauer thinks that a blind action, which never escapes from its blindness, not even for a moment, can occasion nothing but ruinous, contradictory consequences and proceed to ravage the earth. Hartmann thinks that this blind action, which is forever blind, must, since it attains its goal, be that of a God, that the Unconscious is divine. With the divine first phase of its existence, the Unconscious reveals what lies hidden in its night: not an unmentionable drive but the absurdity of a metaphysics that situates the possibility of being in its representability and requires it immediately to transform into its opposite.

But before losing itself in representivity's metaphysical field of vision in the form of tragic or miraculous consequences, the thesis of action's immanence radically rejects that very representivity. The fact that action never actualizes itself in the open space of ek-stasis, that it contains no means or goals, nothing representable, and even less the power to carry itself before itself in representation, does not make it absurd or incomprehensible: on the contrary, *action's nonrepresentability constitutes its very possibility*. Action's possibility is the self-containment and being-with-self of acting being, which therefore always already possesses its constitutive powers and consequently is ready to use them. The being that is one with its own powers and receives its essence from its ability to deploy them is the body. Body is defined by the sum of its powers (seeing, hearing, feeling, touching, grasping, moving, etc.) only because they are *its* powers; it draws its essence from the possibility of using them. Now, such a possibility is identical to those powers considered in themselves; it makes each of

them indistinguishably a power, a power of body. Original body is *soul*, in the Cartesian sense of the word; it is immanence and life.

If Schopenhauer's will is in turn body, it is for the same reason—because it has its ultimate precondition not in the simple fact of willing but in will's inherence in and coherence with itself. Will has no need of body or life as an external manifestation and mirror of itself. *Its manifestation is its force*, which consists of its being-with-self and the original Unity through which everything is what it is and receives its power of being. Will is based on a prior force, as Nietzsche will see. Schopenhauer was already thinking of this same force, under the name of will, if will really is defined by its opposition to representation. For the ek-static relation, especially the ek-static relation to self, is precisely what is absent when force liberates its power. Force is the basis for will's conjuration of goals and means, projects, computations, and calculations, that original force that far from being reducible to production, insurmountably rejects it. The refutation of representivity's metaphysics and its origin in *physis* is not theoretical but practical. It consists of the simple recognition of corporeality. Everywhere in the world—outside itself, where body distributes its force—the metaphysics of ek-stasis is already banished.

To separate will and body, when the latter is reduced to the object of intuitive representation, Schopenhauer emphasizes the fact that body's preservation is accomplished by a group of needs to which it is submitted and whose untiring actualization escapes its own will. Thus, in the activities of drinking, eating, and procreation, body appears essentially passive. Speaking of "the contradiction by the will of its own phenomenon," the author of *World* adds, "Although here also the body objectifies in the genitals the will to propagate, yet propagation is not willed" (I, 334). But must not what is affirmed of body also be affirmed of will itself? *Will wills, but it does not will its own action*. Precisely because will wills without ever being master of its willing, this precondition also applies to body, which is will itself, and body's needs never cease to will, though they are never willed themselves. Will's illusory doubling in the objective body makes us think that will can choose to will or not will, not to will body and

its needs. Representative ek-stasis creates the space of a freedom founded on the "not" of its nothingness: we could not will that object just as easily as will it if we only wanted to. But the original, real body is no different than will. Neither has any knowledge of ek-stasis; neither has the freedom to unfold beyond or before itself the space of a distance in which it would be preferable to escape oneself, to propose oneself as an object, to will or not will. Like will, body is stuck in itself, enclosed in its own being: it is immanent and alive.

With will's immanence we return to life's essence. Life is original self-experience in self-suffering. Thus, based on the essence that makes it alive, everything living is riveted to itself and is eternally what it is. According to Schopenhauer, man is forever nailed to Ixion's wheel, condemned to endless willing. Being-riveted-to-self, the precondition of will, is not will as self-presentation. It results from neither will nor its power. Will's essence contains its anti-essence, its inability to will or not will itself. This inability is the greatest force. A force greater than itself lies within will, a force that precedes will and against which will is powerless, the force that delivers will to itself and its own being. This force is life. It is the force of being, the edifying gathering that presents everything to itself. Such a force, which is neither action nor will, which is not action but its opposite, is the passion of being, the primal suffering in virtue of which the essence of being is also that of life. After immanence and as its ultimate precondition, every philosophy of life inevitably encounters this second essential determination: *affectivity*.

The most remarkable feature of Schopenhauer's work is that affectivity occupies its center not as an explicit and deliberate theme but as what it encounters everywhere, as what transfixes existence and determines its rapport with every form of being. Affectivity, until then almost completely excluded from the philosophical debate, intervening only occasionally as a marginal problematic, now became its only object. "All life is suffering," says Schopenhauer (I, 310). Every mode of life, therefore, is merely the modalization of a single suffering: here weariness; there shame, regret and remorse, boredom, disgust, infinite fatigue. There is no longer any need to obey the

Socratic precept "Know thyself"; it is enough merely to cry. Relationships with others too are no longer a matter of knowledge; they are pity or cruelty. The principal forms of common existence—groups or associations, what Schopenhauer calls communities—are of two sorts. Purely "formal" ones, based on intellect, are opposed to "material communities," real ones like family, class, and so on, which are naturally affective: "With these it is a question merely of disposition" (2, 231). Precise, individual, yet highly important problems concerning love, never before considered, like the motivation behind loving glances, are developed at length.

The world is an enigma, a "troubled dream" (2, 573), a procession of miseries, and yet its secret may be grasped. And it is precisely affectivity that reveals the secret: "The inner nature of the world . . . expresses itself intelligibly to everyone in the concrete, that is, as feeling" (1, 271). And when, thanks to this revelation, one finally escapes the play of sorrow, it is again affective modalities that constitute the concrete form of that liberation: "unshakable peace, a deep calm and inward serenity" (1, 390). Thus, between the unhappiness of the man abandoned to desire and the salvation of the ascetic and saint, who have accomplished the self-negation of their will-to-live, there is merely a difference of affective tonality, a sort of dialectic of affective life itself. "Then . . . instead of the constant transition from desire to apprehension and from joy to sorrow; instead of the never-satisfied and never-dying hope that constitutes the life-dream of the man who wills, we see that peace that is higher than all reason, that ocean-like calmness of the spirit, that deep tranquillity, that unshakable confidence and serenity" (1, 411).

Schopenhauer's metaphysics is a metaphysics of will, but *will* is often merely a name for affectivity itself; for example: "Not only willing and deciding in the narrowest sense, but also all striving, wishing, shunning, hoping, fearing, loving, hating, in short all that directly constitutes our own weal and woe, desire and disinclination, is obviously only affection of the will, is a stirring, a modification, of willing and not-willing" (2, 202). Or again: "All that which is the business of the *will* in the widest sense, such as desire, passion, joy, pain, kind-

ness, goodness, wickedness, and also that which is usually understood by the term '*Gemüt*' . . . is attributed to the *heart*" (2, 237).

But affectivity is not just some empirical character of life that can simply be noted. Even less is it a synthetic, external determination, foreign to its own being: "Suffering is essential to life, and therefore does not flow in upon us from outside. . . . Everyone carries around within himself its perennial source" (1, 318). This is an entirely new philosophic *intentio*, one that tears affective existence away from facticity's domain where it is usually abandoned. Instead, it institutes an affective eidetic, thus enabling an a priori discourse on affectivity. More important, it confers a wholly exceptional status on that previously unperceived essence. No longer is affectivity a mere fragment of the universe of pure laws. Now it is absolute essence and life. Schopenhauer's description of his project, to "convince ourselves *a priori* . . . that [human] life . . . is essentially suffering" (1, 323), must be understood as something totally unheard of, at least till then. Misery ceased to be what it always had been—an unhappy accident, a natural peculiarity, or the necessity of an incomprehensible fate. It became the a priori structure and innermost possibility of all that is, or as Nietzsche, following Schopenhauer, said, the Mother of Being.

We are now ready to understand why Schopenhauer's extraordinary project could not be adequately realized, why instead the fundamental questions it was the first to thematize led not to the elucidation of an immense new field but to an impasse. The main reason is that the essence that allows affectivity to be the object of eidetic apprehension is not truly life's, not its original self-affection, which is identical to affectivity itself, but what we have called its ontic concept, the reductive seizure of life as will-to-live, as will and desire. Thus, affectivity is no longer contained in itself, in the ontological essence of life, but based on a reality other than itself, which is not an essence, not even its own, but a fact, the fact of a need, the fact that, according to Schopenhauer, life presents itself as a never-satisfied appetite, as a drive submitted to the process of its infinite reiteration. An explanation replaces essential analysis, the analysis of absolute essence.

How can life, interpreted as need, “explain” affectivity? Very simply! Every natural explanation, especially scientific ones, every theory that fails to grasp the problem of original possibility, sees that problem with the clarity that nonperception of essential foundations always provides. Need (will, desire), if it gets to its goal, provokes pleasure, well-being, happiness; it is a satisfied need. If it does not get there, it elicits the opposite: misery, suffering, uneasiness, dissatisfaction in all its forms. Schopenhauer repeatedly says, “We call [will’s] hindrance through an obstacle placed between it and its temporary goal, *suffering*; its attainment of the goal, on the other hand, we call *satisfaction*, well-being, happiness” (1, 309).

The primary accomplishment of defining affectivity as an effect of need is its determination by a foreign principle. Affective life’s laws, properties, and future are no longer really its own; nor can it explain them; they are laws of something else. Affectivity’s historicity is no longer founded on its own essence, is no longer its own inner development. It is the historicity of desire and has its ground or reason in desire, in what Schopenhauer calls will. There is, therefore, something that precedes and governs affectivity, something of which affectivity is merely the consequence. That is why Schopenhauer’s pretension to furnish an a priori theory of affectivity proves illusory: affectivity is precisely not a priori; it is a posteriori, a posteriori to will.

For example, Schopenhauer recognizes, or *discovers*, two modalities of affective life: satisfaction and dissatisfaction. He does not describe the modalities as they are in-and-for-themselves but as a function of will’s attaining or not attaining its goal. Will’s nature accounts for there being something like satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the world: they are its affective tonalities, pleasure and suffering, well-being and unhappiness. And that is because will is essentially desire, need, and lack of what it does not have. Thus, if it obtains these, it is “satisfied”; in the opposite case, “dissatisfied.” Only if a being is constituted in its being as lack of being, only if reality is constituted in its reality as lack of reality, can satisfaction and dissatisfaction, joy and pain, present themselves to and be experienced by affectivity;

only then is affectivity in general possible. This is what Schopenhauer calls furnishing an a priori theory of affectivity: giving will the appearance of being affectivity’s necessary condition of possibility, the foundation without which it would be impossible.

Not only is will, as will-to-live, the condition of possibility of affectivity and its dichotomy (the division of fundamental tonalities into satisfaction and dissatisfaction, agreeable and disagreeable), but it also determines their respective situation: precisely the fact that there is no ontological equivalence between these tonalities, the first, supposedly positive, somehow having the right to be and realize their being, the others merely “negative.” For since will is infinite, endless desire, always beginning again, it is clear that there is “nowhere a final satisfaction” (1, 309). As soon as satisfaction arrives and will believes it has reached its goal, the movement that eternally forces it forward repeats, or rather continues, and dissatisfaction comes along with it. Additionally, satisfaction is not only precarious (the world order governed by causality is provisional and foreign to our wishes), but it has no specific actual content, precisely no “positivity,” since it is nothing but a momentary suspension of misery. The purely negative nature of every apparently happy form of life is a leitmotif in Schopenhauer and the foundation of all his pessimism. “All satisfaction . . . is really and essentially always negative only, and never positive. It is not a gratification *which comes to us originally and of itself*. . . . Satisfaction or gratification can never be more than deliverance from a pain, from a want” (1, 319; my emphasis).⁸

The respective situation of the dichotomy’s fundamental tonalities, satisfaction’s secondary position in relation to a primal dissatisfaction, must be thought fundamentally. For in the strange dialectic sketched out here, dissatisfaction somehow intervenes twice. On the one hand, it is placed on the same level as satisfaction: both *result* from the presupposition of need—dissatisfaction when need misses its aim, satisfaction when it attains it. On the other hand, and more essentially, dissatisfaction somehow precedes itself, no longer the a posteriori result of desire missing its “object” but an original component of desire, as desire. Here affectivity is not proposed as the effect

of will and its play; it is inherent to and originally qualifies will. Will is no longer the a priori precondition of affectivity, an affectivity that proceeds from will and its history. Instead, affectivity is now presented as an a priori determination of will, since will is desire and need and desire and need exist only as already affectively determined, as modalities of affectivity, always already presupposing affectivity.

The fallacy of this thesis (i.e., affectivity's dependency on a preliminary *conatus* [effort or striving], on desire and exertion toward being), adopted from the tradition by Schopenhauer, must finally be recognized. This fallacy's most naive formulation is the affirmation that agreeable tonalities result from satisfied desire and that disagreeableness in all its forms results from unsatisfied desire. Affectivity, which was supposedly explained by need's reaching or not reaching its goal, is already implicated in the "satisfaction" or "dissatisfaction" of a desire. Merely "arriving at its goal" contains nothing affective or anything that could produce affectivity. The arrow that strikes its target finds no satisfaction in the act. Arriving at a goal *and* being satisfied by it can be accomplished only by a being already constituted in-itself as affective and thus capable of being affectively determined, capable of "experiencing" tonalities. Therefore, as *conatus* toward what it needs, need can feel the specific phenomenological tonality we call satisfaction only if it already belongs to life, as a need whose original being is its self-appearance as identical with life and affectivity's essence. Only because will is such a need, a need originally determined in-itself as affective, can it then modulate its affectivity in accordance with its history. In the end, Schopenhauer already implies will's prior affectivity since he conceives of life as essentially and fundamentally suffering.

Nonetheless, does not life suffer precisely from being will, the desire for a reality it never attains? Doesn't need's inability to fulfill itself, to attain its goal, provide its original dissatisfaction? Admittedly, existence is dissatisfied according to Schopenhauer because infinite will has no corresponding object, because there is no *bonum supremum*. More fundamentally, however, as has been shown, its

original ability to experience anything whatsoever (dissatisfaction and its history, for example) is tragic only because it is an affective history, "a life history."

Schopenhauer's text, therefore, operates a singular though still veiled reversal. Will, intended to determine affectivity and its various tonalities (depending on its degree of "satisfaction"), suddenly finds itself second to affectivity. Suffering, far from resulting from *conatus* and its failure, precedes it, eliciting and making it possible. After recalling once again that "suffering [is] essential to, and inseparable from, life," Schopenhauer says that suffering forces life forward and makes it, in that project-before-itself, a desire: "Every desire springs from a need, a want, a suffering" (I, 375).⁹ Desire is desire only as the function of a lack; that is, of being constituted in-itself as lack-of-being. But that lack becomes desire and need only when it affects a being that is already capable of being affected. In the end, pain and suffering, since they cannot bear themselves and therefore endlessly aspire to surpass and throw themselves beyond themselves, become desire.

This secret reversal of will and affectivity's precedence becomes visible at the very moment when Schopenhauer is explicitly defending the opposite thesis, that of will's primacy. Specifically, this reversal occurs when the "explanation" of pleasure and pain borrows the mediation of body. As we have already mentioned, body is will's phenomenal appearance; therefore, "every impression on the body is also at once and directly an impression on the will. As such, it is called pain when it is contrary to the will, and gratification or pleasure when in accordance with the will" (I, 101). The rest of this passage has the merit of removing affective tonalities from the realm of presentation, without, however, being able to assign them a more precise status: "We are quite wrong in calling pain and pleasure representations, for they are not these at all, but immediate affections of the will in its phenomenon, the body." And the passage ends in a definition where it becomes evident that pleasure and pain arise from will only because of the presupposition of what is supposed to be

explained, the impressional nature of that pleasure and pain, which are "an enforced, instantaneous willing or not-willing of the *impression* undergone by the body" (1, 101; my emphasis).

Will's and affectivity's respective situations in relationship to life, the validity of their respective claims to constitute that essence, are decided in the extraordinary analysis where the possibility of repression is first recognized. This passage is proposed as an analysis of madness, but because it engages the system's fundamental thesis, the disjunction of will and representation, as well as the former's determination of the latter, it sustains other claims. The most important of these is that will, which concentrates and is identical to all power, represents nothing while reciprocally, representation wills nothing, can do nothing. "This [reciprocal relationship] is due to the fact that the will in itself is without knowledge, but the understanding associated with it is without will" (2, 208). Thus the efficacy of will is radically opposed to the inertia and passivity characteristic of representation and intellect. Will and representation are mutually exclusive in their power and in their capacity for manifestation. Consequently, when the two come together, as in man, bringing to will the light it lacked, representation, which has no power, necessarily submits to will. Thus, the relationship between these two fundamental faculties of the human spirit is not like the collaboration between blind man and paralytic. Instead, a hierarchy regulates their relationship since the power of clarification has no power and therefore *what is clarified does not depend on what clarifies but on another principle*.

A paradoxical, nearly inconceivable situation occurs when intellect truly becomes will's "valet." In this situation, when taken to the extreme, intellect is not only relegated to a subordinate position but, we might legitimately say, is simply eliminated since its essence, the "cause of seeing" is transformed into its opposite, a "cause of not seeing," a "hiding." The very meaning of representative life is not only altered but completely reversed when representation ceases to exhibit what is. Schopenhauer assumes this situation, at least partially, when he writes: "Yet with all this [these reciprocal relations],

the primacy of the will becomes clear again when this will . . . once makes its supremacy felt in the last resort. This it does by prohibiting the intellect from having certain representations, by absolutely preventing certain trains of thought from arising. . . . It then curbs and restrains the intellect, and forces it to turn to other things" (2, 208).

From intellect's fundamental passivity, with its externally imposed principle of action, comes a theory of memory *and* forgetting. Memory only appears to be a faculty of representation since as the power that leads represented content before the spirit, it is precisely not the ability to pose-before or pro-duce an ob-ject. Instead, memory, in itself foreign to pro-duction, is what permits or prohibits that accomplishment. Speaking of "what takes place in all retention and recollection," Schopenhauer affirms: "Its basis and condition is always the will" (2, 223). Just as will is the precondition of memory, it is also that of forgetting; to will that a certain content not enter the light of representation results from the same principle that supports memory; it is simply that principle's negative determination. Forgetting explains many surprises. Schopenhauer complacently takes up the example of people who have inventoried every conceivable solution to one of their concerns only to discover with astonishment that they missed the most obvious one, the very one that finally occurs. "This can be explained from the fact that, while their *intellect* imagined that it surveyed the possibilities completely, the worst of all remained quite invisible to it, because the *will*, so to speak, kept this covered with its hand" (2, 217).

The internal difficulties of these conceptions, today taken for granted, are fully exposed by the theory of madness. In reality, this theory is the theory of repression; it repeats and deepens the problematic of memory and forgetting. Whereas "real soundness of mind consists in perfect recollection" (2, 399), Schopenhauer considers madness a memory disorder, and this disorder, as he understands it, is called repression in modern psychology. What does it stem from? Essentially from will's refusal to allow a repugnant representation to penetrate the spirit.

Remember how reluctantly we think of things that powerfully prejudice our interest, wound our pride, or interfere with our wishes; with what difficulty we decide to lay such things before our own intellect for accurate and serious investigation; how easily, on the other hand, we unconsciously break away or sneak off from them again; how, on the contrary, pleasant affairs come into our minds entirely of their own accord, and, if driven away, always creep on us once more, so that we dwell on them for hours. *In this resistance on the part of the will to allow what is contrary to it to come under the examination of the intellect is to be found the place where madness can break in on the mind.* (2, 400; my emphasis)

Schopenhauer conceives experience to be a painful process in which unwilld representations must nevertheless constantly become conscious and in their necessary connectedness be recognized as constitutive of the world order. Experience is the difficult entry of the unwilld into intellect and therefore a painful impression, which, once accepted and assimilated, slowly becomes weaker. Imagine, however, will's categorical refusal to allow the spirit to be penetrated by a representational content so displeasing that it would be "unbearable." Consider the fact that infinite will has the radical power to reject such a content from consciousness, to "repress" it. Then a lacuna appears in the representational continuum, something like a "hole" in the fabric of the world, which will then tries to fill with other representations invented or displaced for that purpose: a truncated representational continuum, an arbitrary chain of phenomena, an arranged, fabricated past, arises, and madness along with it. "On the other hand, if, in a particular case, the resistance and opposition of the will to the assimilation of some knowledge reaches such a degree that that operation is not clearly carried through; accordingly, if certain events or circumstances are wholly suppressed for the intellect . . . and then, if the resultant gaps are arbitrarily filled up for the sake of the necessary connexion; we then have madness" (2, 400).

Thus the constitutive element of madness is clearly indicated. It is not an affection of memory, even though memory is disordered, the content of its recollections falsified, their continuity broken. It is not a weakening of reason, even though reason—that is, the necessary,

causal order of phenomena—is also disturbed and misdirected. It is not a disorder of sensible intuition, even though the perception of the present and the objects surrounding the patient can be altered and even overthrown in their significance. In truth, despite appearances, memory, reason, and perception remain intact for the mad person. This is proved by the fact that these faculties take up their normal function as soon as the disturbing principle, which does not reside in them, stops interrupting their work from the outside. "Neither the faculty of reason nor understanding can be denied to the mad, for they talk and understand, and often draw very accurate conclusions. They also, as a rule, perceive quite correctly what is present, and see the connexion between cause and effect" (1, 192). So, since the conception and intuition of the present is not at issue, it must be the relation with the past and the past itself that is faulty: "For the most part, mad people do not generally err in the knowledge of what is immediately *present*; but their mad talk relates always to what is *absent* and *past*, and only through these to its connexion with what is present. Therefore, it seems to me that their malady specially concerns the *memory*" (1, 192).

But as we have seen, what is abolished is not the passive ability to propose recollections one after the other, not representative memory, but solely the ability of such potential recollections to penetrate the sphere of consciousness. The defect, therefore, does not reside in memory: "It is not, indeed, a case of memory failing them entirely, for many of them know a great deal by heart, and sometimes recognize persons whom they have not seen for a long time. Rather is it a case of the thread of memory being broken, its continuous connexion being abolished, and of the impossibility of a uniformly coherent recollection of the past" (1, 192). We have also seen what "the thread of memory being broken" and "its continuous connexion being abolished" mean: the absence of a representation or recollection does not arise from a deficiency of memory itself, an inability to furnish that representation, but from another power's prohibition against memory's filling that blank. Memory disorders, then, are strictly parallel to those of reason and intuition and are similarly explained: in each case

there is a gap in the representational continuum and its artificial filling, so that the lacuna never arises from representation itself but from the splitting of two incompatible faculties in the spirit, one passive and the other all powerful, and more exactly from the second's power to repress the first, will's power to repress representation.

What is the possibility and essence of repression? How can will prevent a representation from entering the sphere of consciousness? Wouldn't will have to know the representation already to know that it was incompatible and shunt it aside? In other words, wouldn't will have to be already conscious of that representation, that is, represent it? For the principle of light, or any power whatsoever, where does the ability to suddenly suppress itself reside? Such difficulties affect every theory of repression in a metaphysics of representation, in a philosophy of the unconscious. In Schopenhauer, they take the following form: how can will want to repress the importunate representation when will doesn't represent anything, when it doesn't know anything about representation? Offering repression as an explanation of madness, chapter 32 of the supplement to the third book says: "Certain events or circumstances are wholly suppressed for the intellect, *because the will cannot bear the sight of them [weil der Wille ihren Anblick nicht ertragen kann]*" (2, 400). But the will never catches "sight" of anything since in-itself it is foreign to all possible representation. Chapter 19 already ran into the same aporia. Already formulating the theory of repression, the text exposes the way will controls intellect "by prohibiting the intellect from having certain representations, by absolutely preventing certain trains of thought from arising, because it *knows, or in other words experiences from the self-same intellect*, that they would arouse in it any one of the emotions previously described" (2, 208; my emphasis). But how can intellect teach will that certain representations will arouse certain emotions, adverse ones, for example? How can will learn anything whatsoever since it is the faculty of night, necessarily blind, fundamentally determined in its being by nonrecognition (*Erkenntnislosigkeit*)? In man, will is joined with representation. But where is the principle of that junction? In other words, where can an absolute power, but one that excludes the struc-

ture of representation, identify with that representation and benefit from its light? For the enigma of repression is identical to the enigma of that union, since in repression the blind power that represses the representation necessarily contains the little bit of hidden knowledge that always belongs to the unconscious and allows it to do what it does so subtly. In this instance, will first sees, out of the corner of its eye, the representation that it will, as Schopenhauer so nicely puts it, "cover with its hand" to stop seeing it.

Let us therefore ask some fundamental questions: Why do will, desire, or drive repress representation? *Not because of its representative content but because of its affectivity*. "Now if such a sorrow, such painful knowledge or reflection, is so *harrowing* that it becomes positively *unbearable*, and the individual would succumb to it, then nature, alarmed in this way, seizes on *madness as the last means*." "Remember how reluctantly we think of things that . . . *wound*" (1, 193; 2, 400; my emphasis).¹⁰ If repression belongs to psyche's fundamental constitution as one of its most constant and profound laws, it is primarily because the representation that must be repelled, or welcomed, is affectively determined. Only affectivity makes it the object of rejection; only affectivity makes rejection possible and necessary. Then a second question inevitably arises: How and why can a representation be determined affectively or, as Freud said, invested (cathected) with an affect (emotion)?¹¹ This truly crucial question must be asked prior to establishing any theory of repression if it is true that repression always presupposes and is motivated solely by the repressed representation's affectivity.

Now, to explain representation's affectivity, empirical psychology immediately offers its services, proposing its explicative principle par excellence: association. Because a certain representation is bound to a certain traumatic event, it bears an affective charge, which may then provoke its eventual exclusion. However, if representation's affectivity comes from association, it is contingent to association and external to its own being. Certain representations may bear an affective charge, others not, and far from constituting a general law of the psyche and the principle of its comprehension (the principle of formation or

nonformation of all representative psychic content in general), representation itself is a merely contingent phenomenon, an occasional and thus localizable mechanism. What this naively self-evident theory and its mass of supporting examples lack is nothing less than their theoretical possibility, the possibility that originally and necessarily gives every representation its affective determination insofar as that representation presupposes the proto-foundational act of exteriority, which if only in order to be and to accomplish itself affects itself and contains the essence of affectivity. That a representation is or can be affective is not an a posteriori result of its fortuitous encounter with other empirical elements of experience but an a priori result of its own constitution and upwelling. Only because all representation is affective can it consequently, in the course of and seemingly as a result of experience, bear an affectivity that the course of experience merely modulates. If "association" designates something other than the impossible assemblage of the incompatible and impenetrable elements "representation" and "affectivity," it is nothing less than a name for the structure of being.

Once representation's affectivity is established as the preliminary precondition of repression, a third question arises concerning repression's actualization and action: Why does will repel that representation? Is it not precisely because of that representation's tonality, its disagreeable character, so disagreeable in fact that madness is sometimes preferable to holding that representation before the gaze of consciousness? But a pure, totally nonaffective power would have no reason to reject any representation whatsoever unless that power was already originally constituted as affective. "Remember how reluctantly [with what *repugnance*] we think of things that . . . wound," says Schopenhauer, or "this resistance [*repugnance*] on the part of the will to allow what is contrary to it to come under the examination of the intellect" (2, 400).¹² Thus it is never pure will itself that expels the representation but only a will preliminarily determined in itself as affective, as repugnance, wounding, disgust, or shame.

"Preliminarily" is important here because strictly speaking, it is not will that accomplishes repression but only its affectivity; affectivity

will or does not will the representation. *The movement of will is nothing but the movement of affectivity itself and what is more, its self-movement.* For what affectivity does not will, what it tries to repel with all its force, is itself, or certain of its determinations. It is disgust itself, as insupportable (as unable to bear itself, as wanting to suppress itself), that hunts the incriminated representation and prevents it from forming. That is why the relationship of mutual dependency between will and affectivity in Schopenhauer's economy of the psyche must be reversed: it is not will that produces affectivity but affectivity that incites will—namely, the process of repression—and this process is based on affectivity itself and what it experiences insofar as it can and will no longer experience it. Life always contains and explains the law of its own development and action.

A final question arises concerning the relationship between the repression accomplishing affectivity, "will's" affectivity, and the repressed representation's affectivity, the relationship between will's "repugnance" and the tonality of "things that wound." A final self-evidence imposes itself: will's and representation's affectivity are the same, one and the same tonality, one and the same determination of life. Since the act that originally founds exteriority and every possible representation is self-affecting, the formation of representations always arises from affectivity. The affectivity of representation is the affectivity of the power that forms it—or does not form it. This second possibility is repression, whose enigma is now revealed. For if in order to push a representation out of consciousness it is necessary in some way to know it in order to measure its inopportuneness, since that representation is not yet formed, it cannot be the representation that instructs us about it and invites us to push it aside. It is not its representative content but its affectivity, knowledge without representation, knowledge before representation, secret knowledge of every representation, that already knows what it is going to represent, that permits or prohibits its representation. And we can also understand this: the repressed representation, the representation whose formal reality prevents the objective reality, does not exist in some "unconscious," under the name of some monstrous psychological entity.

It is simply never formed. And the unconscious itself, which was supposed to serve as its receptacle, does not exist either. What does subsist is a tonality, emerging in the first sphere of being, like an accident, or being deployed as *habitus*. So to account for repression, there is no need for the mythology of topographies or their characters, roughly borrowed from the world of representation. Life's knowledge is enough.

The fundamental significance of affectivity as the elemental determination of psyche, made evident in the analysis of repression, is finally implied in Schopenhauer himself. For according to the most frequent declarations, affectivity is not simply the result or effect of will; nor, when it becomes evident that desire proceeds from and presupposes suffering, does affectivity simply precede will. The crucial nature of tonalities is incontestably affirmed when they well up and actualize their being at the very moment will is out of the picture. Far from presupposing will, tonalities accomplish themselves in its absence. Thus a crucial eidetic situation is set up in which psyche's essence can no longer be defined by will, which has become a contingent determination whereas its affectivity remains invariable. Now, this situation is not merely theoretical; on the contrary, it constitutes the telos and salvation of Schopenhauer's thought. For salvation consists of the suppression of will. That this is accomplished as self-suppression does not change the fact that at the end of this process will is gone. If will is life's essence, such a state means death. But this is merely an appearance, and the object of the whole system is the unmasking of that appearance: "What remains after the complete abolition of the will is, for all who are still full of the will, assuredly nothing. But also conversely, to those in whom the will has turned and denied itself, this very real world of ours with all its suns and galaxies, is—nothing" (1, 411–12). Affectivity is precisely what makes that state something other than nothingness, what subsists in life when will is abolished ("highest joy and delight in death"; "the man in whom the denial of the will-to-live has dawned . . . is full of inner cheerfulness and true heavenly peace"; 1, 390, 398). Salvation is always described in affective terms. This is especially true of the aes-

thetic experience where annihilation of will and liberation of positive tonalities (calm, joy, love) go hand in hand. Because the painter's eye escapes from will, it can be absorbed in objects "for comprehending them with such affection" (1, 219).

It is significant, then, that Schopenhauer finds himself in difficulties when, lacking a systematic elaboration of the fundamental concepts his philosophy leads to, he is held prisoner by the classical categories, being sent from one to the other of them: the elimination of will allows the possibility of aesthetic pleasure, "delight from pure knowledge and its ways" (1, 200). Thus, affectivity arises in the absence of will only to be referred, paradoxically, to knowledge in its ekstatic essence, an essence on whose foundation no affective tonality is ever produced.

Thus we see Schopenhauer contradict himself once again. In opposition to all the texts where the positive tonalities of joy, rapture, and peace are credited to a gaze finally freed from desire—in opposition to the explicit definition of salvation as an affectivity whose principle is in pure knowledge ("Then . . . we see that peace that is higher than all reason, that ocean-like calmness of the spirit, that deep tranquillity, that unshakable confidence and serenity, whose mere reflection in the countenance, as depicted by Raphael and Correggio, is a complete and certain gospel. Only knowledge remains; the will has vanished"; 1, 411)—we see in the same passage, in the same eidetic situation, the same definition of salvation, but this time affectivity expels not only will but knowledge too: "That state . . . which is denoted by the names ecstasy, rapture, illumination, union with God, and so on . . . cannot really be called knowledge, since it no longer has the form of subject and object; moreover, it is accessible only to one's own experience" (1, 410).

Schopenhauer's thought is divided between two approaches to affectivity. It is important to clarify how the first, determining life's essential tonalities and their destiny by an external principle, inevitably denatures them since this improper thematization weighs on all modern thought and is found, notably, in the background of Nietzsche's efforts. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are therefore offshoots

of will. The stronger will is, the stronger are the dissatisfaction and suffering that accompany it (see 1, 362). But in reality, since will is infinite, dissatisfaction and suffering are endless. As a provisional end to desire, satisfaction too is merely provisional—or rather, impossible. And here the determination of affectivity by a foreign principle shows its absurdity. Indeed, satisfaction presupposes desire, but it also suppresses it. Therefore, satisfaction is the suppression of its presupposition, of its own precondition. Schopenhauer formulates this series of absurdities in the following text: “[Satisfaction] is not a gratification which comes to us originally and of itself, but it must always be the satisfaction of a wish. For desire, that is to say, want, is the precedent condition of every pleasure; but with the satisfaction, the desire and therefore the pleasure cease; and so the satisfaction or gratification can never be more than deliverance from a pain, from a want” (1, 319).

The sophism of this reasoning, which shows up again in Freud, overdetermined by the no less absurd conception of entropy, is situated in the premise. It is obvious in fact that as soon as affectivity is grafted to and based on will, as soon as satisfaction is the satisfaction *of a desire* and is possible only as such, then, as the suppression of that desire, satisfaction is possible only as its own suppression. It disappears at the very moment it was supposed to be produced. We must therefore submit to this obvious fact: far from being explained by desire, all satisfaction is made impossible by it. Schopenhauer expresses satisfaction’s necessary impossibility by saying, as we have seen, that it is “*negative* only,” and the meaning of this strange presupposition is expressed in the conclusion: “Satisfaction or gratification can never be more than deliverance from a pain, from a want” (1, 319; see also 2, 575).

But the deliverance from a pain, in the sense of its pure and simple interruption, in the sense of its suppression, in the sense of death being the deliverance from life, is absolutely nothing. A negative affective state, strictly speaking, is a square circle. It is not sufficient to say with Hartmann that there are also positive pleasures;¹³ we must say that all pleasure, all satisfaction, all deliverance, all affective

tonality in general, whatever it may be, is positive. Its positivity resides in its very phenomenality, in its affectivity, which constitutes the original essence of all revelation and all possible being. A tonality is not solely what it is. In it there is always the essence of being’s first upwelling. Nothing precedes it. The reversal of all Schopenhauer’s categories is rooted in being’s essence and innermost structure, in the fact that far from depending on will, affectivity founds will in its being-possible, determining it a priori as affective, as libido and desire.

No thought has the power to ignore completely affectivity’s radical phenomenological significance and determinations. It can only falsify them. Schopenhauer accomplishes this falsification in several ways. At first, affectivity’s power of revelation seems to be recognized in its metaphysical capacity (in Schopenhauer’s sense of the word): affectivity is the revelation of will, the “absolutely immediate affections of this will itself” (2, 248). To manifest will, however, is understood in two totally different ways. On the one hand, affectivity reveals will in its self-affection and thus constitutes its very being, so that this being is deployed in and by affectivity alone. As this radical ontological and phenomenological precondition, affectivity defines will’s innermost possibility, an essence outside of which will does not exist. On the other hand, the matter is explained wholly differently by Schopenhauer: affectivity still manifests will but as different from it, as something that is not sentiment and is not contained in it, and further, as something that in itself does not manifest at all.

In radical opposition to the inner overlapping of affectivity and will (consisting of affectivity’s exhibition and self-affective constitution of will’s being), Schopenhauer attempts to separate the two: on the one hand, sentiment reduced to the condition of phenomenon (“affections of will in its phenomenon,” I, 101), and on the other, will, which far from showing itself in phenomenon, far from manifesting *itself* in manifestation, remains outside of them, in its night. The relationship between affectivity and will has become that between Kantian phenomena and the thing-in-itself.

Thus, when regarding events that we do not have or take the time

to understand but to which we react affectively, *Schopenhauer* writes, "From the depths of our nature the will, always ready and never tired, steps forth unbidden," and it "shows itself as terror, fear, hope, joy, desire, envy, grief, zeal, anger, or courage" (2, 212), it must be understood that these tonalities, in exhibiting themselves, do not exhibit will's being-in-itself. They are simply its sign or indication. Their presence, their manifestation, means that elsewhere something unmanifest is producing them. Tonalities are the smoke that rising from the house, permits one to deduce that a fire is burning inside but allows nothing but suppositions about the nature of that fire. Will is not desire, that pressure, experienced as discomfort, gradually turning to pleasure or increased suffering. The process of life is doubled: an unconscious drive has awakened somewhere, and the living actualization of desire is merely its always suspicious phenomenological translation. This illumines the inevitable connection between misunderstanding affectivity's specific revelatory power and the outgrowth of theory, which then interprets affectivity as having its basis in unconscious will.

Reciprocally, the theory of affects as effects of an unconscious agency increases that misunderstanding, definitively veiling the radical phenomenological significance of affectivity itself. We have already seen how that theory led Schopenhauer to the absurd negation of the very fact of pleasure; that is, its phenomenality. But it also leads to the strange affirmation that each person has every feeling and experience. This is shown not through an eidetic analysis of affectivity, which would expose them as necessary possibilities and in a certain sense actualizations of affectivity, but once again through a tangential transcendent construction: since will (unknown and unconscious) is infinite, since its whole essence is present in every will, all its effects—that is, the infinite spectrum of passions and torments—are also inscribed in that will as its destiny. This explains the Hindu myth of the transmigration of souls: if you have willed, if you have killed an animal, no matter who or where you are, you will someday be killed in turn. Thus, wrapped in rational argument, the myth of the Eternal Return takes shape.¹⁴

The explanation of affectivity through an agency external to affectivity and experience in general is the whole project of "The Metaphysics of Sexual Love," chapter 44 of the supplement to the fourth book of *World*. Love is an appearance whose metaphenomenological, "metaphysical" foundation is will. Thus, the "phenomenon" of love is accounted for by metaphenomenological determinations of a metaphysical will; that is, by unconscious determinations of an unconscious will. Now, (as unconscious determination) "will wills life absolutely and for all time." It does not simply desire it here or there in the form of one particular individual. It is not "merely . . . an impulse to self-preservation," but since it "has an endless series of generations in view," it is more essentially a "sexual impulse" (2, 568). The sexual instinct is therefore not a particular instinct, localizable among others. According to Schopenhauer, it constitutes the foundation of being, metaphysical reality itself. The "sexual impulse . . . is in itself . . . simply the will-to-live" (2, 535).

Since will is identical to will-to-live (for as has been shown, the first inevitably changes into the second) and is thus also identical to sexual instinct, explaining affectivity by will is the same as explaining it by sexuality: "All amorousness is rooted in the sexual impulse alone . . . however ethereally it may deport itself" (2, 533). However trivial and prosaic this reduction of love to sexuality may appear, it is not associated with the positivism of a psychology attempting to be objective and naturally "scientific" but arises from a prior metaphysics: "My view will appear too physical, too material, however metaphysical, indeed transcendent, it may be at bottom" (2, 533). More exactly, it arises from the "metaphysics of sexual love," which from the first situates affectivity in general in "mere" appearance and seeks its principle in a *conatus* = *X*.

How the explanation of affectivity based on an unconscious principle brings about the denaturation of its specific power of revelation and finally the pure and simple negation of what it is, of its phenomenological reality, is accomplished as follows. Will, as we have seen, wills the whole of life in each point of its being reduced to its single point of operation, the point where it wills everything. This means

that infinite will is present in each individual: "In every individual the whole undivided will-to-live . . . appears" (2, 590–91). The individual's will, therefore, is not solely his own, a will that seeks the conservation of that individual, his goals and personal pleasures. It is more fundamentally the whole will that wills everything, all of life, and wills the infinite succession of generations—the sexual will or the will of the species. From the variance between these two wills arises the illusion that one is pursuing individual aims and egoistic pleasure when in reality the individual is pursuing the goals of the species, the goals of infinite will as such. More important, will itself is what gives birth to such an illusion in the individual since, accomplishing itself in him, it must lead him to accomplish its own goals: "Nature can attain her end only by implanting in the individual a certain *delusion*, and by virtue of this, that which in truth is merely a good thing for the species seems to him to be a good thing for himself, so that he serves the species, whereas he is under the delusion that he is serving himself" (2, 538). According to Schopenhauer's explicit declaration, "This *delusion* is *instinct*" (2, 538) because instinct "sets the individual in motion for the good of the species" (2, 539). Or rather, if it is true that identical to will, sexual instinct too is unconscious, the delusion is instinct's phenomenological effect on the individual subjectivity, namely love, which is a "stratagem" of nature since in that amorous passion, which the individual imagines is "for his own enjoyment" (2, 540), it is really a matter of procreating the best possible new individual.

And so men desire women with large breasts because through their gaze, the "spirit of the species" looks and says, "Ah yes! The baby will be well fed." Likewise, blonds love brunets, the short love the tall, and vice versa. Unwittingly, each seeks in the other the corrective for his or her faults, complementary characters whose combination is destined to produce an individual most in keeping with the ideal prescribed by the species. *Love is the anticipated enjoyment of an infinite bliss*, which the lover believes will be found in the arms of the beloved and will holds out like a lure. This enjoyment is will's *presentation to consciousness* through which will attempts to realize itself in

the species.¹⁵ That is why, since "he seeks not *his* interest, but that of a third person who has yet to come into existence," *love is blind*¹⁶ and why affectivity, explained by will, is a delusion, its power of revelation not merely altered or misunderstood but totally denied and reversed.

What constitutes the revelatory power of affectivity when it becomes the object of such a reversal? Certainly not itself, in its affectivity. (And therefore affectivity and its revelatory power are really not Schopenhauer's concern, nor are they that of classical or modern philosophy in general: they simply go unperceived.) Instead, it is constituted in conscious intention, in representation: "An instinct, directed absolutely to what is to be produced, underlies all sexual love" (2, 542). This intention, the so-called real intention of all love, is that of the species. It is opposed to that of the individual, who believes he is pursuing his own enjoyment. This latter intention is delusional, its representation false. "Here then . . . truth assumes the form of delusion, in order to act on the will" (2, 540). Truth: sexuality's object is the perpetuation of the species. Delusion: its object is the individual's enjoyment. The interpretation-explanation of affectivity based on will signifies and presupposes a complete misunderstanding of affectivity's revelatory power, its reduction to will's revelatory power, or since will is blind, to representation's, both of them being connected in individual consciousness. Only at the price of this reduction, of affectivity being confused with representation, can affectivity be declared delusional. For there is no possible delusion of feeling itself, which is always necessarily what it is since its being resides in its phenomenality, which is identical with its affectivity.

Here a new consequence is discovered: the misunderstanding of affectivity's specific revelatory power, as original and absolute power, questions the very reality of feeling, so that it ceases to be an absolute. It is no longer the unshakable termination on which every attempted interpretation or meaning crashes. Instead, it becomes an uncertain, indeterminant being whose site is no longer assignable. It is now impossible even to say whose feeling it is. In fact, since affectivity is no longer self-based or self-determined, the site and essence of an absolute subjectivity, but is explained as an external effect of will, the

problematic arrives at an impasse. For since there is not one will but two, the individual's and the species's, two series of tonalities result: the first constituted of mediocre feelings suited to the limited being who merely projects his own conservation; the second, of infinite feelings aroused by an infinite will, the feelings of love:

The longing of love . . . associates the notion of an endless bliss with the possession of a definite woman, and an unutterable pain with the thought that this possession is not attainable; this longing and this pain of love cannot draw their material from the needs of an ephemeral individual. On the contrary, they are the sighs of the spirit of the species, which sees here, to be won or lost, an irreplaceable means to its ends, and therefore groans deeply. The species alone has infinite life, and is therefore capable of infinite desire, infinite satisfaction, and infinite sufferings. (2, 551)

But when the act of procreation is accomplished and the vertiginous feeling of love comes to an end, each lover experiences "an extraordinary disillusionment" (2, 540) that shatters the delusion to which they have been victim, and returns them to themselves. In a phantasmagorical transubstantiation, the lover's subjectivity is substituted for that of the spirit of the species, and each feeling is undermined by an ontological abyss.

The reduction of affectivity's specific revelatory power to representative knowledge is well documented in Schopenhauer, despite occasional attempts to separate intellectual and affective comprehension (which in any case remains a "comprehension") and despite the final remark that there are "two paths" to salvation, the one constituted by "suffering which is merely and simply *known*" and the other by "suffering immediately felt" (1, 397). The examination of tonalities that play a crucial role in the system is generally falsified in its principles. A significance is synthetically attached to them in the light of ek-stasis, and this new significance is inevitably substituted for the essence of their own phenomenality. A pang of conscience, for example, is really a tonality, but it proceeds from knowledge, from the metaphysical knowledge of the nature of things in me, from that blind and stubborn will from which I have yet to escape: "Pangs of

conscience . . . are pain at the knowledge of oneself in one's own nature, in other words, as will. They rest precisely on the certainty that we always have the same will" (1, 297). Similarly, shame concerns the act of procreation, of which human life is the "paraphrase," a shame concerning the body as will's objectification and focus, that is, concerning will. Thus, shame is reduced to knowledge, knowledge of the "riddle" of the world: "Shame over the business of procreation extends even to the parts that serve it . . . a striking proof of the fact that not merely man's actions, but even his body, are to be regarded as the phenomenon, the objectification, of his *will*, and as its work" (2, 570). As a last example, sadness "is a consciousness that has resulted from knowledge of the vanity of all possessions and of the suffering of all life" (1, 396).

But bound to and more or less confounded with knowledge, affectivity becomes an offshoot of the *principium individuationis*, which constitutes a crucial dividing line for that knowledge. For in the end there are two sorts of knowledge in Schopenhauer: one that succumbs to that principle and one that escapes. That line also divides all our feelings, which are thus split into two parties: those that are duped by the delusion of individuality and those that surmount it. This division occurs in such a way that the dupes are duped by representation and its delusion, just as those that surmount it do so through a gaze that pierces the *principium individuationis*. Cruelty, for example, belongs to the first genre; for in demanding an attenuation of its own suffering, or even a pleasure, from the sight of another's suffering, the cruel person is so convinced that his own feeling differs from his victim's that he finds himself in an antithetical relationship with that victim, whereas since they arise from a single essence, all feelings are really identical and their distribution among apparently different individuals, and hence their own difference, is purely illusory.

Schopenhauer presents this theory of delusion in striking terms. He whose eyes are clouded by the veil of Maya "sees not the inner nature of things, which is one, but its phenomena as separated, detached, innumerable. . . . For pleasure appears to him as one thing,

and pain as quite another; one man as tormentor and murderer, another as martyr and victim; wickedness as one thing, evil as another" (1, 352; my emphasis). Thus at the very heart of this grandiose conception, the falsification of the theory of affectivity is accomplished by the principle of individuation, by its reduction to knowledge. Precisely because affectivity's specific phenomenality (i.e., affectivity itself) is misunderstood, or rather explicitly denied, so is the reality of tonalities: joy is no longer defined by itself; it is no longer joy,¹⁷ no longer reality. The same may be said of pain: it too is no longer pain, no longer a reality different from joy, and the tormentor is not distinguishable from the victim. This reversal of the order of things, which Nietzsche will reestablish with a vengeance (the "strong," the "weak"), appears equally in the theory of tonalities belonging to the second genre of knowledge. Here again, knowledge alone, which "recognizes the Ideas" and "sees through the *principium individuationis*" (1, 354), holds the power attributed to gentleness, charity, sanctity, and mysticism, and finally constitutes their reality.

Since it was not recognized and circumscribed in its specificity, affectivity's revelatory power is totally hidden. This is because affectivity arises from will, under whose concept, as we have seen, it is generally included. Thus it is shown, like the concept of will, to be reduced to the condition of the known and not that of the knower. Thereafter, just as in the philosophical tradition, every conceivable revelatory power is explicitly referred to ek-stasis and its mode of knowledge. This is shown by the theory of consciousness, of manifestation in general:

Self-consciousness . . . contains a knower and a known. . . . But as the *known* in self-consciousness we find exclusively the *will*. For . . . all striving, wishing, shunning, hoping, fearing, loving, hating, in short all that directly constitutes our own weal and woe, desire and disinclination, is obviously only affection of the will. . . . But in all knowledge the known, not the knower, is the first and essential thing. . . . Therefore in self-consciousness the known, consequently the will, must be the first and original thing; the knower, on the other hand, must be only the secondary thing, that which has been added, the mirror. (2, 202)

Hence, affectivity, via will, is essentialized only to be deprived of any revelatory power and to fall, as in classical thought, to the rank of blind facticity.

Despite its shortcomings, *The World as Will and Representation*, by placing affectivity at the center of its thematic, opens the way of life to modern thought, allowing crucial advances to be made by Nietzsche, who even in his last writings would say, "my great master, Schopenhauer."

Life and Affectivity According to Nietzsche

Immanence and affectivity are the two essential characteristics of life that Nietzsche thinks through to their end, even if he does not thematize them explicitly but allows himself to be borne along by them and their implications. Nietzsche's concept of life is borrowed from Schopenhauer, and at first it has merely an ontic significance. Life is will, but will is the essence of what is, its mode of being, and in this "metaphysical" sense, it is being itself. Just as in Schopenhauer, will, originally understood as identical to life, then extends to cover the entire world, not some vague representational will but the essence of all power. The effects of that power in nature are manifestations of the same force that operates in us. Every expression of energy is merely a manifestation of the will that as the form of all possible real energy, is called will to power:

Suppose nothing else were "given" as real except our world of desires and passions, and we could not get down, or up, to any other "reality" besides the reality of our drives. . . . Is it not permitted to make the experiment and to ask the question whether this "given" would not be *sufficient* for also understanding on the basis of this kind of thing the so-called mechanistic (or "material") world . . . as holding the same rank

of reality as our affect? . . . In short, one has to risk the hypothesis whether will does not affect will wherever "effects" are recognized—and whether all mechanical occurrences are not, insofar as a force is active in them, will force, effects of will. Suppose, finally, we succeeded in explaining our entire instinctive life as the development and ramification of *one* basic form of the will . . . [and that] all organic functions could be traced back to this will to power. . . . Then one would have gained the right to determine *all* efficient force univocally as—*will to power*. The world viewed from inside, the world defined and determined according to its "intelligible character"—it would be "will to power" and nothing else.¹

Nietzsche's will differs from Schopenhauer's in being qualified as "power." The above text explains what power is: power means causality; true, efficient causality; power in its actual accomplishment; real action; force: "The question is in the end whether we really recognize the will as *efficient*, whether we believe in the causality of the will . . . and at bottom our faith in this is nothing less than our faith in causality itself." Thus, in Nietzsche, the critique of causality affects only its rational representation as a system of laws that regulate Becoming. But for those who grasp the essence of becoming "from within," causality is nothing less than absolute, identical to the real exercise of force, an active power.

But for Schopenhauer too, will is true causality, the single power whose eruption and unfurling compose the only reality. If will has no cause, it is precisely because will is true causality, and true absolute causality depends on nothing, drawing from itself the energy to do everything it does. Schopenhauer helps us understand that representation contains no force, that force's being cannot come from anything but itself, not even its own exteriority. That is why for Schopenhauer as for Nietzsche force (and, since both being and beings are constituted by force, the whole universe) can be apprehended ("given," says Nietzsche) only in force's interiority, in this case "in us."

Nevertheless, between Schopenhauer's will and will to power there is much more than a simple difference. The first, as we have seen, is enigmatically affected by a lack, the desire for a being that it

doesn't have and more important, that it is not, whereas will to power, as Heidegger has accurately noted, is not the will to a power that it lacks, toward which it merely strives. If that were the case, how could will, separated from power, ever catch up with or even start toward it? Through what power could it begin to move? The point of departure in will to power is power itself. "Will" merely designates the expansion and deployment of that power, a deployment possible in it, from it, and through it, its self-movement.

But the "difference" between Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's will shows up most clearly at the level of affectivity and life's affective tonalities. That is because in and by such tonalities will encounters the phenomenality that makes it actual. Right from the start, especially in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the affective specificity of Nietzsche's "will" (identical to life) is obvious. Whereas Schopenhauer's will, as inextinguishable desire, was an endless, pathetically described torment, Nietzsche (though recognizing the tragic nature of existence, notably as the basis of the Greek soul) starts by contrasting that desire and misfortune, perhaps as their precondition, with a greater joy, the "eternal joy of existence" professed by Dionysiac art. Nietzsche admittedly maintains Schopenhauer's pessimism and celebrates "the terrors of individual existence" in a view that links decline and death to all that is born, that sees art as a provisional salvation and "metaphysical comfort": "We are really for a brief moment primordial being itself, feeling its raging desire for existence and joy in existence."² But this joy finally emerges as contemporary with primordial being, and desire is overcome in it.

But there is more, more explicit, in any case. For that whole protean universe of becoming and annihilation with its parade of torments is revealed to be the consequence of an endless intoxication, procured by the superabundance of life, which the multiple forms that life calls into existence press toward and reveal, through the very interplay of their birth and death, the overflowing fecundity of the power that engenders them. That is why

we are pierced by the maddening sting of these pains just when we have become, as it were, one with the infinite primordial joy in existence, and

when we anticipate, in Dionysian ecstasy, the indestructibility and eternity of this joy. In spite of fear and pity, we are the happy living beings, not as individuals, but as the *one* living being, with whose creative joy we are united.³

Life's no longer being unveiled simply as the vanity and eternal suffering of a pointless desire but through them as the joy and intoxication of an indestructible power is not a passing statement but the revelation of tragedy, which, eliminating all that separates man from his essence, takes him back to it, to the thought that "life is at the bottom of things, despite all the changes of appearances, indestructibly powerful and pleasurable."⁴ Because it expresses life's indestructible power, which is entirely resolved in the pure essence of joy, the satyr chorus erupts into tragedy, the "chorus of natural beings who live ineradicably, as it were, behind all civilization and remain eternally the same, despite the changes of generations and of the history of nations."⁵

The meaning of this positive determination of life must now be recognized. The opposition between the unhappiness of existence, as unfulfillable lack, and the incommensurable and original joy of existing, as the experience of life's superabundance and power, does not result from two mutually exclusive conceptions of life, one marked with absolute pessimism, later called nihilism, the other, assuredly not optimistic but sufficiently differentiated from the first as "pessimism of strength."⁶ Even less is it the result of two contradictory evaluations of that life of suffering, the first saying no, struggling to find concrete modes of negation, the second saying yes, gazing steadfastly at the whole of suffering and its eternal return. If there is one crucial agreement between Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's philosophies, it is the eidetic impossibility of life's taking a position in regard to itself, separating from itself and then willing to be itself or not, to take itself up again and grasping its essence, to coincide once again with itself.

Only once was Schopenhauer unfaithful to that ultimate prescription—when, as we have seen, he separated life and will, conceiving the first as the objectification of the second, thus being forced to

make will a mere “will-to-live,” the aspiration to attain being and life outside itself, whereas in reality, *what is not* cannot do anything, not even aspire to be, and nothing is more repulsive to life than being-outside-itself since it reposes entirely in itself and since what is originally one with and in possession of itself cannot additionally desire itself. And in fact it is on this point that Nietzsche takes Schopenhauer to task in these essential lines of *Zarathustra*: “Indeed, the truth was not hit by him who shot at it with the word of the ‘will-to-live’: that will does not exist. *For, what is not cannot will; but what is alive, how could that still want to live?* Only where there is life is there also will.”⁷

Therefore, the radical refutation of will-to-live, a specific and inessential thesis in Schopenhauer, doesn’t merely patch up life and being by calling them will to power. It aims at their very status, their essence, and then at the status of will to power itself, insofar as it is and claims to define life. In fact, in a fundamental ontology it is unimportant that life is will to power—why shouldn’t it be simply will? Rather, what is in question and must be made clear is how and why will to power is living, what enables it to construct through its own means, if it can, life’s essence and being. On this subject Nietzsche says two things: on the one hand, aphorism 693 of *The Will to Power* declares, “The innermost essence of being is will to power,” so it appears that the essence of being must be unveiled through an analysis of will to power; on the other hand, however, the previously cited text of *Zarathustra* states that will is possible only through “being” (“For what is not cannot will”). In other words, will’s site is not its own but is exclusively constituted by life: “Only where there is life is there also will.” From this apparent contradiction we must conclude that what is at stake is in fact a single problematic whose theme is will to power guided by a single purpose: to elucidate the essence and truth of being. Why does such a radically ontological problematic occupy itself with will and, overdetermining Schopenhauer’s approach, feel itself obliged to rectify that approach, further defining *will* as will to *power*?

Do not forget that for Schopenhauer, will is not some vague

desire separate from reality. On the contrary, as we have shown, will is original body, not representation’s, not the philosophical tradition’s body-object, but real body, the body of real movements and actualizations. And the fact that these actualizations (those of desire, for example) are never really “satisfied” changes nothing of their reality or the reality of the body whose actualizations they are. Indeed, for Schopenhauer, this reality is nothing less than being itself, and that is why he defines being (in-itself, not simply its representation) as will. Schopenhauer’s will, therefore, is never distinct from power. It is power, all the world’s real power, concentrated in the only essence where it is possible. Moreover, all the power of that power is then concentrated in each of its points, in each of its determinations—hence the vertiginous character of its action, the hallucinatory character of Schopenhauer’s universe.

What, then, is the meaning of Nietzsche’s addition of “power” to a will that in each of its points is already power, an all-powerful power, encountering no obstacle but itself and in fact having no differential element whatsoever except representation, which it uses like a toy, twisting and deforming it in every direction, making of it what it will? Only this: no matter what the degree of that power, no matter what intensity and amplitude of force it releases (and on this point Schopenhauer was undoubtedly much more radical than Nietzsche), power and force must first *be*. And that being consists of the preliminary and presupposed power in virtue of which power and force have already grasped themselves and their own essence, in virtue of which they *are*. In Nietzsche’s view, will to power means the power of will; that is, not simply the fact that will is power and according to Schopenhauer’s striking statement, body, but the more fundamental fact that all power, all force, and even the body itself are merely the work of a more original power that throws them into themselves and constrains them to be. In that original power, only power and force are licensed to deploy themselves.

Now, supposing there are degrees of power, “quantities of force,” and their intermingling and conflict are born from inner modifications of these forces. Nevertheless, the power by which they are and

in which despite their vicissitudes they remain knows neither degree nor quantity, neither growth nor diminution, neither modification nor alteration. It is the omnipresent and omnipotent hyperpower in every power, turning it over to itself, making it ready to be what it is. All its power is in each thing, the weakest as well as the strongest. Thus we understand that no force, no matter how insignificant and derisory, fails to bear the incommensurability of that hyperpower, which in fact is not a measure for any force, since it cannot be measured by any, being in each before its action, taking and giving its measure, the incoercibility of its self-grasping bond.

Obviously such a hyperpower is anterior to and not drawn from any power. It does not arise from any power by abstraction since it is the foundation and possibility of the "experience" of all power. This hyperpower does not make the experience of worldly forces possible. It does not give us access to them. It merely gives each force access to itself in the unconditionality of a self-coherence in which there is nothing else—nothing in the world, only a Self, the self of that force and its action.

Now the unconditionality of the self-coherence of force acceding to itself as a "self" does not happen after the fact but is the precondition of force's advent. We must remember that with Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, modern philosophy took a decisive turn: for the first time, being was explicitly interpreted as life. This interpretation does not imply that being itself is forgotten. Far from reducing being to one mode of being of one privileged being, the determination of force as living force brings thought to the incoercible and unconditional self-embracing of the original self-advent that grows from itself and that, in the intoxication of that experience and growing-from-itself, a growing that never begins or ends, is Life—what the young Nietzsche calls "the incommensurable and eternal joy of existence" or, in the language of myth, "Dionysus." The elaborated concept of the will to power, which is that original self-growing included in unconditional self-embrace, the "more" in "more rich in himself,"⁸ which alone determines that one "needs oneself,"⁹ is the very concept of being fundamentally understood as life. Life's precondition is not

in being, according to the immediate speculative evidence that wants life first to be. Life is the initial phenomenological accomplishment of being and hence its precondition. But the primal coming-into-being of life that grows from and experiences itself in the intoxication of that growth is "immanence."

Nietzsche imagined life's immanence in many ways, under many guises, and they all must be recognized. But in the crucial and often-repeated proposition that life is forgetting, immanence is affirmed immediately. Forgetting is not "thinking of" and is usually opposed to memory, which consists of thinking what was unthought. However, forgetting and memory are opposed only in thought, as two of its modes, one negative, signifying that thought is not directed toward what it is directed toward in the memory corresponding to and then substituted for that forgetting. Nietzsche, however, means something quite different when he says that life is forgetting. For life, forgetting is not thinking, not by virtue of some distraction or occasional disposition that can be removed but because it does not contain the essence that holds the possibility of thinking anything in general, of remembering, for example. Life is forgetful by nature, as immanence, which insurmountably expels ek-stasis and thus all possible forms of thought. Nietzsche represents immanent life as animal, and this figure runs through his entire work, correctly so if it is a matter of expressing an absence of the thought that traditionally defines man's humanity, specifying him as the rational animal. Thus it is eidetically necessary that the animal, insofar as it represents the essence of life, and life excludes thought, is determined in its being by forgetting: man, "this animal that needs to be forgetful."¹⁰

Since forgetting belongs originally to life and formulates its radical immanence and rejection of the ecstatic dimension in which all thought moves, the very change into the opposite determination, memory, which seemed possible as long as forgetting was secretly held to be compatible with memory as thought's opposing mode and determination, is no longer possible. Therefore, some external intervention—whipping, for example—is necessary to give life, which in itself is incapable of it, not exactly the *capacity*, which it does not and

will never have, but the *habit* of memory. Through habit a behavior is acquired that does not correspond to any prior inner disposition and that is in no way its effectuation or actualization. Nietzsche gives this compelling, forced acquisition, imposed on life despite its essence, its proper name, *training*, thus raising a constellation of concepts grouped around the image of animality but whose inner coherence covers a prescription of essence. Since this essence eliminates the ecstatic Dimension of all thought and thus the playing field of memory, forgetting does not arise from the weakening of an unemployed faculty but from the structure of life and its unconditional willing. At the same time as that Dimension, however, what we call consciousness, along with every form of representivity, is excluded, and this exclusion is forgetting. Nietzsche writes forcefully: "Forgetting is no mere *vis inertiae*. . . . It is rather an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of repression *that is responsible for the fact that what we experience and absorb enters our consciousness as little . . . as does the thousandfold process, involved in physical nourishment*."¹¹ What remains external and prior to the Dimension is thus not nothing, nothing unconscious at any rate. It is the ensemble of our experiences, the totality of our living, and since we live them, we must necessarily live them out of consciousness and in forgetting. Forgetting makes life possible not in the sense of putting aside our cares and thus allowing us to proceed without being hindered by too many things, by remorse. Rather, forgetting is life's precondition as the inner assembly through which life coheres with itself in self-growth. It is the force prior to all force, the power of all power, and the ultimate precondition, identical to the essence of life, which Nietzsche calls health: "This animal which needs to be forgetful, in which forgetting represents a force, a form of *robust* health." That is also why forgetting is the "preserver of psychic order"; that is, the thing that edifies from within, delimiting and conserving psyche's essence, the dimension of origin, incompatible with all consciousness, where being becomes essentially life.

How, then, can what is essentially forgetful remember? How gain the ability to interiorize everything by referring to it in thought, torn

out of time and its annihilation? This is the paradox that Nietzsche inevitably runs into, forcing him to test the ultimate theses of his philosophy once again. This paradox occurs at the beginning of the second essay of the *Genealogy of Morals* and is announced as follows: "To breed an animal *with the right to make promises*"; that is, to remember despite the exclusion of thought by life's essence. It is noteworthy that Nietzsche has recourse to violence in order to cut the Gordian knot of *eidos*. In opposition to the "force of forgetting" he places not simple memory, which as a representative faculty is neither included in nor permitted by life's essence, but a will to memory, "an active *desire* not to rid oneself, a desire for the continuance of something desired once, a real *memory of the will*,"¹² which as will proceeds from life itself and not from ek-stasis. Further, at this point, will is merely another name for life, referring to and suddenly unveiling its innermost possibility. Section 3 of the second essay *explicitly grounds every faculty of memory, as "will to memory," in affectivity*. "If something is to stay in the memory it must be burned in: only that which never ceases to *hurt* stays in memory." As usual when it uncovers the basis of life—affectivity, suffering—Nietzsche's text takes fire, a great breath raises it, the images crackle, the conflagrations of history are invoked, each proof is an inferno, some monstrous torture, some unimaginable suffering, in which we are invited to take our delight. What was necessary for man to fabricate a memory? "Blood, torture . . . the most dreadful sacrifices and pledges . . . the most repulsive mutilations . . . the cruelest rites of all." And for the Germans, "Fearful means . . . stoning . . . breaking on the wheel . . . piercing with stakes, tearing apart or trampling by horses . . . boiling of the criminal in oil or wine . . . flaying alive . . . cutting flesh from the chest." Everywhere, pain is "the most powerful aid to mnemonics";¹³ suffering takes the place of thought and ultimately founds it. But these remarks are premature.

Prior to all force and power of all power, life's unconditional self-coherence is the precondition of their sway, the precondition of all possible action. Consider the image of birds of prey swooping down on lambs to devour them. That difficult but essential analysis is

presented, at least in its apparent content, as a critique of morality conducted in the Nietzschean fashion. It is a matter of refuting the argument by which the lambs attempt to save their lives, condemning the action of the birds of prey. If the lambs get the birds to share their condemnation, they will be saved. But the lambs' argument depends entirely on the presupposition of a doubling of force, of its separation from itself—in short, on the negation of its radical immanence. That doubling, which Nietzsche considers in turn as an illusion of language, of the people, and of science, consists of separating each act's subject, capable of deciding whether to act or not, from the act itself, understood as an effect of the subject's free will, separating, for example, lightning from its flash: "The popular mind in fact doubles the deed: when it sees the lightning flash, it is the deed of a deed: it posits the same event first as cause and then a second time as its effect. Scientists do no better when they say 'force moves,' 'force causes,' and the like."¹⁴

Affectivity and its fundamental determinations intervene here—hate and revenge, the hate and revenge of lambs. The lambs seize upon the fictitious separation of force from itself to evaluate the being and action of the birds of prey, considering them neutral substrata, subjects, free to exercise their force or not, free to be birds of prey or not. The lambs' salvation resides in the birds' freedom to be birds of prey or not, in force's freedom not to be force, not to devour lambs. However, *neither force nor life itself possesses that freedom not to be itself*. Unfreedom, the impossibility of not being oneself, is the regulating, constitutive essence of life's self-relation, its self-experience in the incoercibility of its eternally self-binding bond, its eternity, which Nietzsche calls "the eternal return of the Same."

As the incoercibility of the bond that delivers life to itself, unfreedom is the hyperpower in which being assembles and grasps itself in the original self-experience that makes it life. As unfreedom, being's hyperpower is also its impotence, life's ultimate inability to be rid of itself. Section 13 of the second essay thinks this ultimate impotence in all its rigor. The question is not whether the birds of prey or the lambs are right. Nor does Nietzsche assert that either group is

incapable of *doing* other than they do but more essentially, that they cannot *be* other than they are. Nevertheless, they are what they are only on the basis of the being in them since the structure of being is unfreedom and insurmountable passivity in regard to self, the self's inability to be rid of life's self-coherence. What cannot be rid of itself is Self. That by which everything *is*, is also that by which it is *what* it is: a Self and in that way, life—the structure of absolute subjectivity.

Section 13 is presented as a critique of the "subject (or, to use a more popular expression, the *soul*)," and it has naively been taken as such. What "subject" is called into question by Nietzsche? What "soul" is its "popular" substitute? Nietzsche refuses the doubling of force; it has no neutral substratum that would manifest its force or not. "There is no such substratum; there is no 'being' behind doing . . . 'the doer' is merely a fiction added to the deed—the deed is everything. The popular mind in fact doubles the deed."¹⁵ So there is no subject-substratum under the phenomena, no subject-lightning under the flash, except through a doubling of the act, which as doubling of being-with-self, as ob-position to self, poses it twice, so to speak: once as phenomenon, as the opposed ob-ject, and again as the subject by which the ob-ject is ob-jected. Nietzsche does not criticize the "subject"; he criticizes an interpretation of its essence, namely, the interpretation of the essence of subjectivity in ek-stasis. Force is not based on a subject placed under it. There is nothing outside of it, neither beyond nor before. It cannot fold itself behind itself to propose itself to itself and thus hold itself before itself. On the contrary, it is based on and remains in itself, and there is nothing but itself: "force is everything," and that is its immanence.

Force's immanence is what constrains it to be and to act as itself. That immanence is the reason "will" (the name Schopenhauer and Nietzsche give to force) cannot *not* will. Or as section one of the third essay states, "It will rather will *nothingness* than *not* will." Life's immanence explains nearly all the faces life wears in Nietzsche's work, as well as its properties. For example, the "egoism" of the "noble soul." Egoism designates the mode of being and acting of what is "everything," insofar as in its self-assembly it is everything it is and

everything that is, and encloses nothing else. The unfreedom of that being-in-and-with-itself (which is the basis of Nietzsche's critique of free will and freedom in general) gives its action a mechanical aspect, similar to the law of things, a naive way of being itself. But in the unsurpassable plenitude of what surpasses only itself and thus touches every point of its being and fills everything, egoism's unfreedom is also "being" in the perfection of its accomplishment, "justice itself."

The noble soul accepts this fact of its egoism . . . as something that may be founded in the primordial law of things: if it sought a name for this fact it would say, "it is justice itself." . . . It moves among these equals . . . showing the same sureness of modesty and delicate reverence that characterize its relations with itself—in accordance with an innate heavenly mechanism understood by all stars . . . every star is such an egoist.¹⁶

Self-based, self-coincident, exhausting its being in itself, drawing from itself everything that it is, force in its deployment belongs only to itself and constantly assures itself of what it does in its self-actualization. Since it has nothing outside itself, nothing beyond or before itself and its self-immanence, it ignores everything that implies any transcendence, any spacing of difference, any foundation as other in the alterity of that difference; any reason, cause, pretext, justification, or legitimation; everything that would precede it or, proceeding from an extrinsic consideration, borrow its possibility from the world of representation, calculation, intention, promises, or provision. What is different from it, since it does not exist in it or its action, has no position in relation to it, neither in praise nor blame, love nor hate. Speaking of the "strong" (i.e., force), Nietzsche poetically expresses the precondition of their action not as a psychological trait but as the structure of being: "They come like fate, without reason, consideration, or pretext; they appear as lightning appears, too terrible, too sudden, too convincing, too 'different' even to be hated."¹⁷

The force that finds and holds its actualization in itself is simultaneously and for that very reason wholly incapable of accounting for itself through external self-representation, primordially foreign to its

being. Thus, if ek-stasis contains the act of comprehension, action is possible only as uncomprehended and incomprehensible. Since action's possibility is also its incomprehensibility, it is called instinct. As with Schopenhauer, the apparent paradox of instinct expresses nothing less than life's precondition. That is why Nietzsche presents the example of "the awkward incapacity of noble Athenians, who, like all noble men, were men of instinct and never could give sufficient information about the reasons for their actions." Socrates toyed with and mocked this inability until "in himself he found . . . the same difficulty and incapacity," which he could escape only through "a kind of self-trickery" by declaring that we must "see to it that they [the instincts] but *also* [*auch*] reason receive their due."¹⁸

However, to give *reason* its due, to invoke the world of representation, its causes and laws, its projects and motivations, means precisely that one can no longer give *life* its due. One erects a horizon of comprehension beyond life, thus placing it outside itself so that it no longer possesses itself and its self-being as its only possible justification and meaning, no longer having in itself the secret of its being. Nietzsche describes this occurrence in pathetic terms: "Something was *lacking*. . . . Man was surrounded by a fearful *void*—he did not know how to justify, to account for, to affirm himself; he *suffered* from the problem of his meaning."¹⁹ Beyond everything, in fact, ek-stasis hollows out the space of the question *why*. But life, not having that space in itself, knows nothing of that question, nor does it have any answer: "The noble soul accepts . . . its egoism *without any question mark*."²⁰ Thus it is necessary to reformulate life's eidetic structure, its incoercible self-coherence, which excludes all self-surpassing and all transcendence, every possibility of getting outside, in front of, beside, or above itself, "every . . . craving for some Apart, Beyond, Outside, Above,"²¹ so that only the radical exclusion of what is outside and beyond life—the ideal, for example—handing life over to the immanence of its self-being, also hands it over to itself, plunging it back into the essence from which it draws its possibility of being, which Nietzsche calls reality. Here again, Nietzsche celebrates life's precondition in poetic terms, speaking of

the redeeming man of great love and contempt, the creative spirit whose compelling strength will not let him rest *in any aloofness or any beyond*, whose *isolation* is misunderstood by the people as if it were flight from reality—while it is only *his absorption, immersion, penetration into reality*, so that, when he one day emerges again into the light, he may bring home the redemption of this reality: its redemption from the curse that the hitherto reigning ideal has laid upon it.²²

To what point the structure of immanence, the inability of what remains in itself to be outside itself, constitutes life's most extreme and decisive possibility can be seen in the fact that disturbing it also disturbs the foundations of being. All Nietzsche's thought proceeds from the admitted terror of nihilism's abyss as well as from his pathetic effort to conjure it. This effort is expressed in the well-known distinction operating throughout his work, not without embarrassing the reader, the distinction between the strong and the weak, the masters and slaves. To understand its meaning, we must first formulate four questions regarding it, questions that are interconnected and call for the same answer. First, who are the strong, those invariably praised and adored beings? How are they possible; that is, what is their force? Second, who are the weak, those invariably scorned and denigrated beings? How are they possible; that is, how is weakness possible? Third and fourth, given Nietzsche's unchanging thesis that the weak always triumph over the strong ("One always has to defend the strong against the weak"),²³ we must still inquire into the reason for such a situation; that is, what is the force of the weak and, conversely, the weakness of the strong?

It is easy to account for the force of the strong. The strong are strong since they *are*, since the essence of being is the will to power, that is, force itself. Based on the essence of being, the nature of the strong is all the easier to understand in that as has been hinted, they are nothing but a projection of that essence, a mythical image that really has nothing to do with an overprivileged category of individuals but constitutes the inner structure of being as life. Life is forgetful by nature, by essence, so the strong are equally forgetful. They have no reason to excuse, not even to "forget." Full of themselves and

depending on nothing, they pass over the earth like cavalry, rapid and untouchable. An offense, if there is one, merely occasions increased force. In the strong, life abandons memory's traces and repetitions, manifesting only its "plasticity," its capacity to invent and heal, its continual growth. Life, foreign to representation and the principle of reason, has no "cause," just as it has no memory, no foundation outside itself, and thus the strong "come like fate, without reason, consideration, or pretext." That is why the eidetic analysis of the structure of being as life seems like a recollection of the figures of myth: with each one of them, we glimpse an element of the *eidōs*, a constant of life.

The existence of a caste of masters does not, however, follow from the characteristic that Nietzsche repeatedly presents as crucial: the pathos of distance in which the aristocracy firmly claims its difference and ostentatiously opposes itself to everything lesser, as seen in this magnificent text:

Without that *pathos of distance* which grows out of the ingrained difference between strata—when the ruling caste constantly looks afar and looks down upon subjects and instruments and just as constantly practices obedience and command, keeping down and keeping at a distance—that other, more mysterious pathos could not have grown up either—the craving for an ever new widening of distances within the soul itself, the development of ever higher, rarer, more remote, further-stretching, more comprehensive states.²⁴

But life, for which here as elsewhere aristocracy is merely a cipher, is not "reactive." Far from being an effect of opposition, the contrary is true. Thus the text's apparent order of dependence must be reversed: instead of being the precondition of life's "mysterious pathos" for endless self-growth, the pathos of distance is its eventual consequence.²⁵ But if the essence of aristocracy is life, the force that gives the strong their force obviously cannot be some greater or lesser given force, not some power with a destiny, but the hyperpower that throws all force and power into themselves and thus allows them to grow from themselves and hence overflow.

The weakness of the weak, however, *is* a problem. For if the will to

power is the essence of being, if everything that is, is solely on account of that self-overflowing power, then it is hard to see how weakness is even possible. One external explanation says that, certainly everything is force, but there are gradations of that force, and when one of them is in the presence of a greater, it is weaker in comparison. The quantitative difference creates a qualitative one: weakness and force, and force applies now only to the strongest. This qualitative difference is also expressed by saying that the weaker, submitting to the stronger's action, becomes "reactive," its action henceforth being determined by the stronger, to which it continually submits, whereas only the strongest remains really, completely, and properly "active."

But to imagine that the "quantity" of force is not already a way of thinking the qualitative difference of weakness, supposedly explained by that quantity but already surreptitiously contained in it, is completely antithetical to what Nietzsche intends by will to power, which designates the inner nature of force as a force that overflows *from itself* and thus never stops being what it is. That there is an essence of force that cannot become something else, not even its opposite; that the masters do not suddenly become slaves at the first crossroad where they happen to encounter someone more powerful than they; and that therefore mastery and servitude, force and weakness, are not successive, accidental modes is what Nietzsche postulates in making the aristocracy a *race*, that is, an essence. Likewise, the plebeians are one; weakness too is to be understood, not based on some extrinsic determination but on its inner possibility. But that possibility is exactly the same as that of force. There is nothing else, nothing but life's essence—namely, immanence. Force—and here we no longer consider it naively, in its facticity—is the force of immanence, the unquantifiable, incoercible, and unsurpassable force of the bond that binds life to itself. Nietzsche does not intend weakness as a lesser force but as the negation of its essence and, since that essence is immanence, the rupture of the latter.

For that is what nihilism means, a *No* to life, not the external negation of its factual existence but the destruction of its inner es-

sence. But that inner destruction, as self-destruction—for life itself, and we will see why, says no to life—that self-negation runs into an essential impossibility: precisely the essence of life, since the bond that binds it to itself is infrangible. The impossible self-destruction of the inner essence of life, a self-destruction that as such never stops, is what Nietzsche calls the sickness of life, which makes man (since immanence is animality and must be weakened) a "sick animal," "the sickest of animals." Nietzsche did nothing but regard with open eyes the unfathomable mystery of life's sickness, life's will to attack its own essence and thus self-destruct: "Oh this insane, pathetic beast—man!"²⁶

The end of section 13 in the third essay briefly responds to the question "Man . . . is *the* sick animal: how has that come about?" by hastily enumerating several "causes," or rather manifestations, of life's sickness: man is "the great experimenter with himself," that is, the one who has a bad conscience, who turns his instincts against himself, who takes pleasure in combating his nature, in molding himself, in torturing himself. The self-creator is like that—"discontented and insatiable," "whose own restless energies never leave him in peace," incapable of innovation, of defining destiny—but only because the future "digs like a spur into every present" and never stops tearing it to shreds, thus separating man from himself, hurling him beyond himself, making him the most "courageous . . . most imperiled . . . of all animals." But undoubtedly also the one who, weary of desire always throwing him beyond himself, can only glimpse in the split from himself that reveals his entire embattled past the vanity of that desire; in other words, the man of satiety, of tiredness, of disgust with himself, whose excruciating image Schopenhauer continually held up to Nietzsche. But if we examine these four "causes" of life's sickness, it is evident that they all consist of *ek-stasis*, which, located in life's self-relation, as self-seeing, self-disgust, effort against and flight beyond self, especially as *ek-stasis* of the future, breaks the immanence of that relation, always affecting life in its very possibility.

But in the last resort, all of Nietzsche's many descriptions of sickness refer to the impossibility of an eidetic situation constituted

by the rupture of life's primal immanence. If, for example, we wished to grasp the essential characteristic of what Nietzsche arbitrarily calls the misplaced, the deranged, the disgraced, the disturbed, the immense cohort of unhappy ones whose misfortune feeds their *ressentiment*, we would perhaps perceive the secret of that original morbidity precisely at the point where it seems to relate obviously to the body and its visible deformations, to everything that we naively call sickness. For the body appears as such, poorly made or infirm, only in and by objectivity, and thus separated from itself and its essentiality as a living body. But representation is not responsible for such a situation since it can never give the original body to itself but merely pro-poses a simple image of it, leaving its real essence intact. Only life's deepest will can initiate the self-displacement that seems to occur in the objective body. That is why this body and its avatars—infirmary, incapacity, and sickness—are for Nietzsche symbols of life's metaphysical sickness, the only sickness he cares about. For objective appearance is nothing unless it incites the monstrous project of self-destruction. This is the aim of the miscontents since they are always discontent with themselves. Nietzsche has described all the forms assumed by the project of that rupture: self-doubt, loss of faith, skepticism, objectivism, scientism, self-criticism in all its forms (one is tempted to say "analysis"); all the doctrines of bad faith, bad conscience, self-gazing, interpretation, suspicion; all those that place life's truth outside of life, making our time the "rotting present" that as Ossip Mandelstam said, smells like rotten fish. All these adherents of the division from self, "those who are failures from the start . . . it is they, the *weakest*, who must undermine life among men, who call into question and poison most dangerously our trust in life, in man, and in ourselves."²⁷

That this rupture with life's immanence constitutes the essence of weakness can be seen most clearly if (jumping ahead slightly in the analysis) we cast a glance at the battle of the weak and the strong and the position taken by the weak to overthrow the force of the strong. That destruction of force is precisely the rupture of its self-immanence, acquired if the weak manage to insert their weakness

into the soul of the strong, "if they succeeded in *poisoning the consciences* of the fortunate with their own misery, with all misery, so that one day the fortunate began to be ashamed of their good fortune and perhaps said one to another: 'it is disgraceful to be fortunate: *there is too much misery!*'"²⁸ Force and weakness are thus clearly distributed as happiness and shame, as life's immanence and its rupture.

This impossibility finally leads us to the foundation and true essence of weakness. For what finally makes the weak weak is not only what hides under the mire of shame and self-hatred ("On such soil, on swampy ground . . . every weed, every poisonous plant grows)," the monstrous project of self-destruction, but *the failure of that project, which constitutes the ultimate essence of weakness*. Life's unwillingness to be itself, its will to be rid of Self, is weakness itself since that will necessarily runs into a force greater than itself, the greatest force, the force that erects the Self, the force of force, the force that gives its force to all force and to weakness itself. The relationship between weakness and force, a relationship reflected in the external relationship between the weak and the strong, concerns life's self-relation. It is the relationship of what constitutes the nature of the relationship with what claims to oppose it. In life's inner self-relatedness, how the weakness of not willing to be oneself opposes the force of that Self and thus constitutes the essence of weakness, the essence of the "miserable ones," the essence of the "born failures," is explained in this liminal text: "Where does one not encounter . . . that inward-turned glance of the born failure *which betrays how such a man speaks to himself*—that glance with a sigh! 'If only I were someone else,' sighs this glance: 'but there is no hope of that. *I am who I am*: how could I ever get free of myself? And yet—I am sick of myself!'"²⁹ Here weakness is given its real name: despair.

The third question, "How do the weak overcome the strong?" seems to be an insurmountable aporia if we are supposed to understand how the weakness of life's project to be rid of itself could ever dominate the unsurpassable force of its immanent self-coherence. In truth, if weakness seems to and can overcome the greatest force, it is because weakness carries that force in itself since it *is* and even if it is

the most remarkable weakness, it coheres with itself in life's hyperpower: not for an instant does life's will to be rid of itself cease to belong to and contain life's essence.

Nietzsche states this in his extraordinary analysis of the ascetic priest. Here, for the first time, throwing a retroactive light on the whole work, weakness and force are no longer distributed as two separate entities, no longer referred to two different individuals. The ascetic priest contains both in himself, offering us a view of their inner connection. The ascetic priest is weak because he is the man of bad conscience, of life turned against itself. He is distinguished from the other weak ones since he is their nurse, in which he still belongs to them since to avoid contagion by that terrible life sickness, it is important that those in contact with the sick, especially the caretakers, be sick themselves. But the ascetic priest is strong, perhaps stronger than the strongest ("He must also be strong, master of himself even more than of others, with his will to power intact").³⁰ For his task is crushing; he must defend his herd against both the strong and itself. Against the strong by means of the brilliant invention of the ascetic ideal, which legitimizes *ressentiment* by the reversal of values and, through the operation of those inverted values, by making the diverse forms of weakness "good" and those of strength "bad," ensures the weak's ascendancy over and domination of the strong. And after having defended the weak from the strong by organizing *ressentiment*, he defends the herd against itself by preventing the outbreak of that same *ressentiment* from destroying the herd, which that great magician accomplishes by channeling, guiding, and calming the *ressentiment*. He infects and heals the wound at the same time.

That is how the mysterious imbrication of weakness and strength appears in him and how he converts the first into the second. In and by him, an exhausted life, with its back to the wall, will try to save itself and survive. But what, in its extreme weakness, gives life the unexpected willpower to continue to live, not to succumb to the strong and even to enslave them? What life instinct remains intact? This is what Nietzsche's hyperlucid gaze uncovers at the bottom of the ascetic ideal: "The ascetic ideal springs from the protective instinct of

a degenerating life which tries by all means to sustain itself and to fight for its existence; it indicates a partial physiological obstruction and exhaustion against which *the deepest instincts of life, which have remained intact, continually struggle* with new expedients and devices."³¹ Henceforth the ascetic ideal is revealed as the opposite of what one first took it to be: not a life turned against life, against itself, but life's pathetic effort to survive in the throes of death. "This ascetic priest," the text continues, "this apparent enemy of life . . . precisely he is among the greatest *conserving* and yes-creating forces of life." And again: "Life wrestles in it [the ascetic ideal] and through it . . . *against* death." Nietzsche also explains what this "death," which life fights against so passionately, is: not exactly death, but deadly sickness, life's metaphysical sickness, the "struggle of man against death (more precisely: against disgust with life, against exhaustion, against the desire for the 'end')." We can now understand how the greatest force overflows at the very heart of a degenerating life in order to save it: that life comes into itself in the hyperpower of its immanence.

One doubt remains. Do the preceding analyses fully account for the possibility of weakness and its origin? For why does life turn against itself? Where does the aberrant project to be rid of itself come from? Nietzsche says from suffering ("the whole herd of ill-constituted . . . and all who suffer of themselves").³² And so we return to life's second eidetic determination, constitutive of its most extreme possibility: affectivity.

Affectivity fills the entire Nietzschean landscape; it is everywhere. As in Schopenhauer, the term *will* is often nothing but a way of designating the whole of affective life and its modes, so that the two concepts appear to be interchangeable. For example, stating that intellect is subordinate to and determined by a power of another order, Nietzsche writes: "To eliminate the will altogether, to suspend each and every affect, supposing we were capable of this—what would that mean but to *castrate* the intellect?"³³ In fact, everything appears subordinate to affectivity, particularly in Nietzsche's new way of interpreting one's relationship with the world, namely, valuation and then morality in general. *Beyond Good and Evil* speaks of "a vast realm of

subtle feelings of value" and shortly after: "Moralities are also merely a *sign language of the affects*."³⁴ Most notably, however, as we will see, from beginning to end, Nietzsche's work posits affectivity as constituting in itself the essence and reality of life.

As in Schopenhauer, it is true, the nominal primacy of will often relegates affectivity to a dependent situation as a simple effect of will. Thus, once again the history of our feelings does not have its principle in them but in another history, as if the coming into appearance of the possibilities of principle, included in and constituting the essence of affectivity, no longer composed the historicity of affectivity itself but that of will. A similar situation occurs in Nietzsche when he has to account for the reversal of values proceeding from *ressentiment*; that is, precisely from a fundamental affective mode consisting of revenge and hate. But the explanation of this mode, the ultimate explanation of the reversal of the equation of aristocratic values (good = noble = beautiful = happy = beloved by the gods), explicitly refers to pure will and its pure determination, impotence. "The priests are the *most evil enemies* . . . because they are the most impotent. It is because of their impotence that in them hatred grows to monstrous and uncanny proportions."³⁵ But if we investigate these priests' actions and their efficacy, we note that once again will's power to arouse an affective tonality is invoked. Since the herd in need of care is composed of those who suffer, and since in the end it is necessary to help them escape at least partially from the intolerable part of that suffering, the technique utilized consists, for example, of "prescribing . . . a *petty pleasure* that is easily attainable . . . the pleasure of *giving* pleasure (doing good, giving, relieving, helping, encouraging, consoling)."³⁶ But if we want to understand that joy, we are referred back to will to power itself. For it is the use of will to power, even in small quantities (because doing good procures for the doer a superiority, however "infinitesimal" it might be), that produces happiness.

In taking this dependence to its conclusion, we are led to treat affectivity as a symptom; the "phenomenon," in the sense of simple appearance, cannot be explained by itself but only by something situated outside it, something that itself does not appear. Thus, feel-

ing is the same as any idea of behavior—all are presented as dead and blind content, to be examined by a genetic and critical method that seeks their nature's origin behind them, as behind experience in general. Nietzsche opens the way for Freud, unless this reading of symptoms is really Freudianism's retroactive projection onto Nietzsche.

It is impossible, however, not to see that this extrinsic determination of affectivity by will (a determination shown to be necessarily impossible and even in Schopenhauer himself not really existent) is, from the beginning in Nietzsche, superimposed by a prior definition of will itself by affectivity, or at least the grasping of an inner connection between them. The first name of Will to Power in Nietzsche's work is Dionysus. Now, Dionysus is not a mysterious entity constructed by speculation and placed by it behind experience as a supposed explicative principle. Instead, *The Birth of Tragedy* explains the advent of Dionysus among us, an advent that occurs precisely in and by tragedy. Admittedly, Dionysus is the hidden god who himself never appears on stage and never uncovers his face. And yet he is there, not as the masked and exalted leader of his servants' procession but as the inner principle of their exaltation, their intoxication and agitation—or rather as its true reality, since their joy is also that of the god and reposes in him, since it is "primal joy, in the bosom of the primordially One."³⁷ Primal joy, pain, "primordial contradiction and primordial pain in the heart of the primal unity,"³⁸ "eternal joy of existence," "happy living beings"—such are the names of the One, of will itself and its constituents.

Or are that joy, that suffering, and their modes simply produced, as in Schopenhauer, by will's primordial power insofar as it is "satisfied" or not? Far from it! Anyone who reads closely the Nietzschean essence of tragedy will note in fact that his free analysis liberates something like two superimposed dimensions of affectivity or two successive moments of its approach: only in the first does feeling seem to stem from desire and its prewritten history since satisfaction's happiness is only a provisional stage on the way to the final catastrophe. And in fact it is during this stage that we see the hero fighting with the dramatic course of events that will submerge and beat him.

But it is precisely during the destruction of the hero that we spectators, until then agonizing and struck to the heart by that death, feel an incomprehensible happiness arise in us:

He [the spectator] beholds the transfigured world of the stage and nevertheless denies it. He sees the tragic hero before him in epic clearness and beauty, and nevertheless rejoices in his annihilation. . . . He feels the actions of the hero to be justified, and is nevertheless still more elated when these actions annihilate their agent. He shudders at the sufferings which will befall the hero, and yet anticipates in them a higher, much more overpowering joy.³⁹

The reason for this is that the annihilation of the hero, of his efforts and projects, is also the annihilation of the whole phenomenal world, the world of desire with its infinite and always varied tribulations, and in and by the downfall of the world, its hidden essence is revealed, the essence of life and will, what Nietzsche calls the primal One. Thus life's unveiling consists in that intoxication, and finally life is nothing but that self-unveiling in self-intoxication, "the joy of existence."

Thus the relation to original being stood out for once in Western philosophy as actualized in affectivity, which is not related to being as something other than being but as its own self-relationship, its self-affection, whose phenomenological substance is pleasure. In original being's self-relationship, a relationship that consists of the affectivity of pleasure, each of god's servants stands identical with him: "We feel *his* uncoercible desire and *his* joy of existing." That this present pleasure or that pain "in the bosom of the primordially One" no longer results from will's prior action, as the effect of its success or failure, obviously arises from the fact that the whole world of desire and its vicissitudes has been abolished, so that being is returned to and perceived in its original advent. This is why Nietzsche says that this pleasure is the pleasure of "original being," of the "primal One," which is "eternal," and "incoercible." And affectivity, instead of being naively taken for its own modes according to the play of their occasional causes, is revealed to be the essence that precedes them and makes them possible.

We can now understand the ulterior elaboration of the concept of will to power, its progressive identification with the essence of affectivity, an explicit identification in the crucial statement of aphorism 635 in *The Will to Power*: "The will to power not a being, not a becoming, but a *pathos*." Various formulations of this identification of will with affectivity can be found scattered throughout Nietzsche's work in relation to the most diverse problems. For example, in *Beyond Good and Evil*: "Not the intensity but the duration of high feelings makes high men" (§72). "The will to overcome an affect is ultimately only the will of another, or of several other, affects" (§117). "In the end one loves one's desire and not what is desired" (§175). The affective definition of will to live appears throughout the magnificent preamble to *Gay Science*, explaining how a spirit, having patiently waited "without hope," suddenly finds itself assailed with the intoxication of convalescence and by the same token with the wildest ideas: "This whole book is nothing but a bit of merry-making after long privation and powerlessness, the rejoicing of strength that is returning . . . of a sudden sense and anticipation of a future" (preamble, §1). The return of the apparent bond between dependence and affectivity regarding will is obvious when domination and command, immediately referred to affectivity, are explicitly submitted to it: "Which group of sensations is aroused, expresses itself, and issues commands in a soul most quickly?"⁴⁰

But it is not merely a matter of naively reversing an external relationship between will and affectivity but of grasping the fundamental bond that unites them, which consists of the fact that a power or impotence is never presented to us by itself, nor does it exist as such but only as a *feeling* of power or impotence, and, by the same token, by the fact that there is no reactive universe, a system of naked or objective forces endowed with such a coefficient, but a "reactive pathos,"⁴¹ just as there is a pathos of distance and so on. Power exists only as the feeling of power because there is no power that does not experience itself as such. Power's self-experience is its immanence or belonging to life, to that original dimension where being comes to itself in the Nietzschean image of animality. Only because power

experiences itself and its power can it will to accomplish itself, and Nietzsche then writes: "Every animal—therefore *la bête philosophe*, too—instinctively strives for an optimum of favorable conditions under which it can expend all its strength and achieve its maximal feeling of power."⁴²

Similarly, it is not impotence that provokes hate but the feeling of impotence; that is, impotence itself in the unconditionality of the self-bond of its self-suffering. It is suffering's intolerability, the bond's unconditionality, that provokes the project of breaking the bond, of escaping the suffering, the mad project of self-destruction, which is precisely hate and which life's genius tempers by turning it outward, toward the other, in *ressentiment*. The problematic of weakness left one question in suspense—that of its origin, the origin of life's will to be rid of itself. This question is now answered. Since power and impotence can deploy themselves only by supporting themselves on one another, it is clear that they do what they do solely on the basis of their affectivity. The affectivity of forces is therefore never second. Neither their use nor their encounter causes one to be affected by the other, thus giving birth to their affectivity. On the contrary, only what primally draws upon itself as a Self and thus self-affects itself is capable of being affected by anything whatsoever since affection means something other than the naive concept of an ontic causality. Far from being the simple consequence of its prior affection, force's affectivity is its precondition.

The fact that will to power is pathos does not simply mean that it draws its being from pathos. It also finds its power there. Nietzsche's "will" is precisely "being" as power. Being's power is growth, not as something added to self but as self-growth. The growth of being also means that growth does not come after being. Being does not come first and then grow. This shows how affectivity constitutes will to power, that is, being's self-growth, which forms its essence: being grows in itself as self-affection, and this self-affection is its affectivity, the self-suffering in which being comes into itself and thus grows from itself. Affectivity is not power itself, nor is it force. It is the hyperpower located in all power and force, through which all power

and force grow from themselves. Will to power is pathos because the hyperpower of that self-growth resides in self-suffering.

The most remarkable trait of Nietzsche's analysis is that it never tries to grasp some abstract essence of affectivity but only its concrete actualizations, thus remaining on a phenomenological level from the start. And suffering is proposed as the most constant of these actualizations. It is true that suffering is the object of systematic denigration whenever it is a question of the weak or Christianity. Because they have become insensitive to Christianity's horrible postulations, modern men "no longer feel the gruesome superlative that struck a classical taste in the paradoxical formula 'god on the cross.'"⁴³ But pure suffering is never condemned, only the hate or revenge it arouses or the very peculiar suffering that engenders the will to be rid of self, which in fact negates suffering's original essence. Everywhere else we see a veritable defense of suffering: "The discipline of suffering, of *great* suffering—do you not know that only *this* discipline has created all enhancements of man so far?"⁴⁴ That is why, for example, Oedipus is the one who "through his tremendous suffering, spreads a magical power of blessing that remains effective even beyond his decease."⁴⁵ On the contrary, those who are condemned are those who depreciate suffering or want to eliminate it, those who advocate "the universal green-pasture happiness of the herd" and "sympathy for all that suffers." This they do because "suffering itself they take for something that must be *abolished*."⁴⁶ Thus both Christianity and its "heir," the "democratic movement," are condemned once again, here in a paradoxical manner: "They are at one . . . in their deadly hatred of suffering generally, in their almost feminine inability to remain spectators, to *let* someone suffer."⁴⁷

Suffering, however, is not first the object of an evaluation; it co-constitutes the original essence from which all evaluation proceeds, the essence of life, since life's original possibility is self-suffering. That is why suffering takes its place in the bosom of the primal One whose self-unity, as actual phenomenological unity, has its substantiality and phenomenality in affectivity and suffering. That is why suffering, the great suffering, is the unique cause of man's overcoming, because

in it resides the essence of the primal coming into itself, which constitutes growth as self-growth. That is why it “spreads a magical power of blessing that remains effective even beyond [death].”

Since life originally comes into itself in self-suffering, growing from and experiencing itself, it delights in itself. It is delight. Delight, joy, happiness, intoxication, “overflow of a primordial delight,”⁴⁸ is the second name that Nietzsche gives to life. Tragedy, because it opens us to life, stands “amid this excess of life, suffering, and pleasure, in sublime ecstasy.”⁴⁹ Suffering and joy are not two modes of affectivity. Together they constitute the unique essence of being, as life, as the original self-experience in self-growth of self-delight. Nor are suffering and joy two separate, self-sufficient tonalities. Rather, they are the eternal transition from one to the other since self-suffering in its actualization is always a growing from and delighting in self, since delight has no site or phenomenological actuality except the suffering of that suffering. Being *is* not; it historializes itself in the actualization of original potentialities according to which appearing appears. This original connection of suffering and joy, together constituting being’s historicity as life,⁵⁰ was discovered by the young Nietzsche in Dionysus, as can be seen in this essential text: “The curious blending and duality in the emotions of the Dionysian revelers remind us . . . of *the phenomenon that pain begets joy*, that ecstasy may wring sounds of agony from us.”⁵¹

The history-generating connection of suffering and joy runs throughout Nietzsche’s entire work and serves as its unperceived support. It is in this radical and rigorous sense that Nietzsche’s philosophy is a philosophy of life. Starting with *The Birth of Tragedy*, the transition from extreme suffering to extreme joy experienced by the spectators when the view of the hero in agony alternately arouses anguish and jubilation in them does not come solely from the irruption, through the collapse of the phenomenal world, of the original essence of being and life but above all because that essence itself is constituted and generally made possible by the eternal transition between suffering and joy, especially in the spectator at a tragedy.

Let us now consider, as a more elaborate example, the genealogy

of morals. Nietzsche’s analysis first proposes an apparent or pseudo genealogy. According to it, morality is the result of a primary relationship contained in and constitutive of every society, the relationship between debtor and creditor. This is a contractual relationship, which brings about the appearance of legal persons (“It was here that one person first *measured himself* against another”) but which itself refers “to the fundamental forms of . . . traffic”;⁵² that is, to the real *praxis* of men producing and exchanging their products. In such a relationship, debts become possible and take form, and with debt, the feeling of personal obligation, the necessity of memory, and thus the coming into existence of an animal that can promise, the experience of being at fault, the existence of damages, and punishment as a form of compensation for the damage. The network of moral, affective, and legal relations included in the first couple, “debtor-creditor,” is so dense and so encompassing that it in turn explains the whole of fundamental human relationships, which are merely its extension. For example, the relationship between individual and society (each member has the same contract with the same procession of debts, compensations, and punishments) or the no less important relationships between the diverse social forms and their predecessors, ancestors, and finally God. In fact, the conviction that each tribe subsists thanks only to the work and sacrifices of its predecessors grows vertiginously until it is projected onto the monstrous image of the Absolute Ancestor, to whom one owes everything. Thus the impossibility of ever repaying such a debt leaves only the possibility of “eternal punishment” unless the creditor, paying himself, sacrifices himself to redeem the debtor: “God himself sacrifices himself for the guilt of mankind, God himself makes payment to himself.”⁵³

The mere apparentness of this social genealogy of morals becomes obvious if we remember how Nietzsche locates himself “at the *other* end from all modern ideology,” far from the human sciences that seek the secret of man in objective knowledge: “They are . . . ridiculously superficial, above all in their basic inclination to find in the forms of the old society as it has existed so far just about the cause of *all* human misery and failure—which is a way of standing truth happily upon

her head!"⁵⁴ Nor can history, the history of the first forms of social relations, furnish morality with its genealogy unless one goes beyond "world history" to what Nietzsche calls "decisive history," produced in very ancient times "when suffering was everywhere counted as a virtue, cruelty as a virtue, dissembling as a virtue, revenge as a virtue."⁵⁵ But these times do not belong to history, to the past, not being prior to genealogy but rather the Same of which it is the infinite recommencement, "retaining the criteria of prehistory (this prehistory is in any case present in all ages or may always reappear)."⁵⁶ But as ancient history, as history that lasts forever, that "decisive history" is nothing but the history of essence, the historicity of the absolute and eternal transition from suffering to joy.

Let us consider the decisive sequence of this genealogy. It intervenes when the debtor does not reimburse the creditor, who then has the right to a strange compensation: no longer an equivalent in kind—money, land, or other possessions—but precisely the right to strike, mistreat, despise, insult, and even rape—the right to inflict suffering of any kind. Hence the genealogy's unfathomable question: "To what extent can suffering balance debts or guilt?" And the equally unfathomable answer: "To the extent that to *make* suffer was in the highest degree pleasurable, to the extent that the injured party exchanged for the loss he had sustained, including the displeasure caused by the loss, an extraordinary counterbalancing pleasure: that of *making* suffer—a genuine *festival*." Or again: "To see others suffer does one good, to make others suffer even more."⁵⁷

One might simply call this revenge. But as Nietzsche's implacable gaze discovered, revenge leads to the same problem: "How can making suffer constitute a compensation?" Simply cruelty!? But cruelty too is merely delight proceeding from suffering: "*Cruelty* constituted the great festival pleasure of more primitive men and indeed was an ingredient of almost every one of their pleasures."⁵⁸ This is the true meaning of the genealogy: the recourse to humanity's mythical past, when the offender must suffer so that his suffering might arouse the joy of the offended and thus compensate him, proposes the explicative principle of the relationship debtor-creditor only because it in-

vests this relationship with a more original one, that of life's fundamental tonalities. The genealogy exposes and is made possible by the reversal of suffering into joy, the historicity of being itself.

True, in revenge and cruelty, suffering and joy do not go together. They seem separated, referred to and located in two different subjects, suffering in the debtor and joy in the creditor. Seeing the pain in the offender provokes a compensating pleasure in the creditor. This exteriority of pleasure and pain is the origin of the hardly convincing analysis in which Nietzsche tries to furnish his own response to the most agonizing question: What is the meaning of suffering? The meaning—artificially reconstructed by the priest: "You suffer because you have sinned"⁵⁹—really resides in the pleasure inevitably aroused by all suffering. Suffering, in itself, however, does not have this meaning for the sufferer but only for the rejoicing outside observer. Hence Nietzsche's theme of the spectator: suffering is justified only when there is someone to observe and delight in it. If there is none, it is necessary to invent one. In the ancient world, this task fell to the gods, friends of cruel ceremonies delighting in the tribulations and misfortunes of men and to add zest to the spectacle, going so far as to give the staggering actors their own will and even a freedom. "The entire mankind of antiquity is full of tender regard for 'the spectator.'"⁶⁰ So if pessimism must be overcome and suffering repaid, it is solely through its bond with pleasure—as an extrinsic bond, however. "Today, when suffering is always brought forward as the principal argument *against* existence, as the worst question mark, one does well to recall the ages in which the opposite opinion prevailed because men were unwilling to refrain from *making* suffer and saw in it an enchantment of the first order, a genuine seduction *to* life." And it is only because "morbid softening and moralization" ends up teaching "the animal 'man' . . . to be ashamed of all his instincts,"⁶¹ especially the instinct to make suffer, that, separated from the pleasure it gives to the hand, suffering became nonsense, the object of shame and disgust.

Nietzsche himself, however, invites us to question the exteriority of the bond uniting joy and suffering, as if joy could really arise from

the spectacle of suffering, from a suffering located in a "subject" or "substratum" other than joy itself. "To see this we must, of course, chase away the clumsy psychology of bygone times which had nothing to teach about cruelty except that it came into being at the sight of the sufferings of *others*." To see what? The whole of the "phenomena" in which pleasure and pain appear simultaneously and, correlatively, the endless procession of those who savor them together—"the Roman in the arena, the Christian in the ecstasies of the cross, the Spaniard at an auto-da-fe or bullfight, the Japanese . . . when he flocks to tragedies"—without forgetting, and here Nietzsche's gaze strikes one of the idols of our time, "the laborer in a Parisian suburb who feels a nostalgia for bloody revolutions."⁶² In place of the exteriority of the relation joy-suffering, which seems sufficient to explain cruelty as a mode of experience of the other, interiority, as the opposite of that relation, is here substituted as the relationship of the individual with himself. For cruelty in its most general and constant form is above all cruelty toward oneself, a cruelty consisting of making oneself suffer in which the individual takes pleasure in his own suffering and for that reason makes himself suffer. Nietzsche, in a single glance, takes in the immense field of that particular cruelty:

There is also an abundant, over-abundant enjoyment at one's own suffering, at making oneself suffer—and wherever man allows himself to be persuaded to self-denial in the *religious* sense, or to self-mutilation, as among Phoenicians and ascetics, or altogether to desensualization, decarnalization, contrition, Puritanical spasms of penitence . . . he is secretly lured and pushed forward by his cruelty, by those dangerous thrills of cruelty turned *against oneself*.⁶³

The entire enterprise of knowledge, with its violence against the spirit's penchant to lose itself in appearances, the entire moral enterprise, with its violence against the instincts, proceeds from that violence against oneself.

This cruelty is represented throughout Nietzsche's work by the image of man as a sculptor chiseling his own flesh, to create a thing of beauty, no doubt, but more important, for the immense pleasure of

making oneself suffer. Man, simultaneously creator and creature. Creature: "what must be formed, broken, forged, torn, burnt, made incandescent, and purified—that which *necessarily* must and *should* suffer."⁶⁴ Creator: who forms, breaks, forges, tears, burns, produces all that suffering and delights in it.

Of all the great twentieth-century thinkers influenced by Nietzsche, Max Scheler pushed his meditation furthest. And this meditation, not by accident, garbs itself as a systematic problematic of affectivity, the first of this genre in the entire history of Western thought. Now, if we reflect on the Nietzschean relationship of suffering and pleasure as proposed at this stage of the analysis—that is, in the individual's cruelty toward himself—we perceive that the exteriority of that relationship, evident in the case of the experience of the other, is only apparently surmounted here. It is undoubtedly the same one who delights and suffers, but since he comports himself toward himself as a sculptor toward his "material," as a creator toward his creature, a gap opens between the pleasure of the one who strikes and the pain of the one who is struck. It is this gap that Scheler thinks radically. On the one hand, he recognizes the possibility of the coexistence of two different tonalities in the same individual—pain and pleasure, for example. On the other hand, he founds that difference by identifying it with intentionality. At this point the traditional status of affectivity begins to vacillate before our eyes. Affectivity is not merely a psychical content offered to a comprehension different from it, an intentional perception directed toward that content. This comprehension and perception itself is affective. Thus there is a possible affective perception of all possible affective contents, so that the affectivity of perception and the affectivity of its content are two different tonalities, separated by the very intentionality that unites them. This is precisely the structure of the bond between suffering and joy in cruelty toward oneself. It is the structure of intentional bonding and thus the radical exteriority on the one hand of pleasure and striking, wounding and contemplating the pain caused by that wounding, and on the other hand, that pain itself. In Scheler's view, cruelty toward oneself is only a particular case. Instead of delighting

in suffering, one can just as well suffer, or suffer in joy, from a shameful pleasure, or again delight in it. Both the difference and the simultaneity of tonalities is founded in this principle.

With this astonishing attempt to give a philosophical foundation to Nietzsche's most extreme theses, Scheler is infinitely far from them. At most, he showed how suffering and joy can come together in one individual so that they simultaneously occupy his spirit. How can anyone be sad and joyous at the same time, sad in body and happy in spirit, like Luther before his dead daughter? But Nietzsche is not in the least concerned with how two different and even opposed tonalities can come together despite that difference. He does not seek to found that difference in an intentionality that creates exteriority, nor does he seek to found the togetherness of two incompatible tonalities on that same relation, which intentionally unites perceiving pleasure, for example, and perceived pain. Reunited by the exteriority of the ek-static bond but also, and even more so, separated by it, the two tonalities conserve their irreducible qualitative difference. They face each other, each in its own sufficiency and indifference to the other. Instead, Nietzsche's crucial and still uncomprehended project is to recognize and try to explain how *suffering produces pleasure*. For in fact that is what motivates revenge and cruelty: not the simple fact that suffering and joy can live together in a single individual but something completely different and even "totally opposite," namely, that the will to cause suffering always arises along with the unthought certainty that causing suffering also causes pleasure and, more ultimately, that causing oneself to suffer will carry that pleasure to its extreme. Hence the very overflowing of suffering is also that of pleasure; each mode of the first a mode of the second; each spasm of suffering a spasm of pleasure.

To designate the horrible depths of things that one hardly dares glance at, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche use the same word, *contradiction*. For Schopenhauer, contradiction means that desire has no end, that reality is a "hungry reality." Since this is a contradiction of desire, it signifies an eternal suffering. The same is true for Nietzsche: "the contradiction at the heart of the world," "the primordial contradic-

tion that is concealed in things."⁶⁵ For him too, that contradiction is suffering: "the truly existent primal unity, eternally suffering and contradictory."⁶⁶ But his text does not say exactly the same as Schopenhauer's. Rather than contradiction being suffering, suffering is contradiction. How is suffering contradictory? Because by itself it produces bliss: "contradiction, the bliss born of pain."⁶⁷ To tell the truth, Nietzsche never really explains how pain, by itself, gives birth to bliss, how the latter is somehow born in and consubstantial with the very flesh of pain. The original unity of pain and bliss as constitutive of true being, of the primal One (which is precisely their "contradiction," i.e., their unity) is for Nietzsche never more than the object of an observation. Nevertheless, it constitutes the ground of every analysis, the *hypokeimenon* to which they all return in the end.

Can we understand the original unity of suffering and joy? Only if we first perceive that the one cannot deploy its being without the other, that there can be no joy without something like a primal suffering—not elsewhere, outside of joy, in the exteriority, for example, of intentionality, but *in* it, as its innermost support and precisely its own flesh. For the self-delight constitutive of life's essence has its original possibility in that essence, which consists of a self-experiencing that is originally a self-suffering, the very possibility of suffering. Thus suffering is delight's actualization, not theoretical but phenomenological. Likewise, delight is inherent in suffering as its inevitable product since self-suffering means coming into and delight in one's own being. In this way, according to Nietzsche's crucial statement, bliss is born of pain. Again, that birth must be taken for what it is, for the perpetual coming into itself of what thus endlessly becomes and comes to itself as a Self. Being *is* not. It is a coming, life's eternal coming into itself. This coming does not come from the future, does not go to the past. It is the coming of delight based on suffering. Thus, suffering, in the phenomenological actualization of its self-suffering, furnishes delight with what it delights in.

Henceforth, since suffering constitutes delight's contribution of itself to itself, suffering and delight go together and increase simultaneously. Just as these terms are not mutually external, neither is their

relationship a fixed one. On the contrary, the evolution and development of this relationship is precisely what now must be understood. For the more strongly life experiences itself in the intensification and final climax of its suffering, the more powerful and profound is the manner in which it grasps itself and the more intense is its delight. Thus an oscillation occurs between the two, so that not only does suffering ceaselessly pass into joy, but for that very reason, the excess of the one is the overabundance of the other. This is why when a form of life grows old, abandoning that oscillation, its pathos immobilized in the boredom of an aborted destiny, the moment has come for a return to those ancient times when, as Nietzsche said, revenge and cruelty are virtues because by arousing and if necessary unleashing the fundamental tonalities, we are really turning the absolute over to its own history and the eternal play of life in it.

The exteriority of the fundamental tonalities, which for Scheler is a real exteriority, is for Nietzsche merely an image. That image is cruelty and revenge, and in it suffering and pleasure seem to fall outside each other. But if delight is based on and has its site in suffering, they are equal for both the executioner and the victim. And if the suffering of the one who was originally wronged, the creditor, can in seeing the suffering inflicted on the other change into pleasure, it is because the passage from suffering to joy is originally possible as having that possibility in suffering itself, in self-suffering, as the essence of life's delight. Joy and suffering therefore never face each other as executioner and victim. Their external relationship is merely the representation of the connection interior to everyone who feels delight or suffering. That representation is the representation of the absolute. It ex-poses and dis-joins the original components of the One. It presents them to view. Among the horrors of ancient Greece that fascinated Nietzsche so much was the sacrifice of a young man whose lacerated and bleeding limbs were dispersed so that the blood fertilized the earth and communicated life to it. Nietzsche's philosophy is that ritual murder. It is the dis-junction and enlarged projection onto the sky of the myth of absolute subjectivity's structure.

8

The Gods Are Born and Die Together

The many contradictions and paradoxes of Nietzsche's thought are illuminated in the light of the conceptions exposed in the previous chapter. The gravest and most constant of those contradictions concern the problem of truth. They arise from the fact that perhaps for the first time and certainly for the first time in such a violent fashion, truth is called into question in and as itself. It is not this or that experiential content or thought, some particular, previously established or admitted "truth," that becomes problematic but the idea itself that something is or might be true and is thus necessarily differentiated from everything that does not fit the condition of "being true," a condition more or less identified till then with the very precondition of existence and being. "Indeed, what forces us at all to suppose that there is an essential opposition of 'true' and 'false'? Is it not sufficient to assume degrees of apparentness?"¹

Since truth is problematic or more radically does not exist, all processes that aim at and claim by varying paths to lead to truth, all the procedures of knowledge and science, and even that knowledge and science themselves are shaken in their very *intentio* and consequently in their *raison d'être*. The "will to truth" itself is at stake.

Nietzsche spoke in pathetic terms of the “seekers of knowledge.” He tried to see the English psychologists as “fundamentally brave, proud, and magnanimous animals, who know how to keep their hearts as well as their sufferings in bounds and have trained themselves to sacrifice all desirability to truth, *every* truth,”² no matter how bitter and repugnant. He expected from the moderns, instead of their “moral mawkishness and falseness,” instead of “a *dishonest* lie,” a “real, genuine, resolute, and honest” lie, which would demand of them “that they should open their eyes to themselves, that they should know how to distinguish ‘true’ and ‘false’ in themselves.”³ He praised the French moralists who insisted on “intellectual cleanliness,”⁴ whereas he pitied the “*sufferers* who refuse to admit to themselves what they are . . . who fear only one thing: *regaining consciousness*.”⁵

But if one asks, Who are these sufferers who want anything but to have light thrown on themselves, anything but the truth, who dread the light of consciousness more than anything? the text responds. It is precisely those who inhabit the teleology of consciousness and have taken it upon themselves to lead it to its goal—the scientists. Hence, the seekers of knowledge—those proud, courageous animals who sneeze at their beliefs, their most intimate convictions, and their faith to risk peeking at the whole truth—they too are condemned: “We seekers after knowledge today, we godless anti-metaphysicians still take our fire, too, from the flame lit by a faith that is thousands of years old, that Christian faith which was also the faith of Plato, that God is the truth, that truth is divine.”⁶

The antinomy that makes consciousness and the movement toward it into their opposite, the principle or effect of blindness, reaches its highest degree of tension when it encounters the place where truth traditionally turns back to found itself on itself, the happy hunting ground of self-consciousness as self-certainty. Here, reversing Terence’s dictum, the phrase that explodes truth’s return to itself and the principle of all assured knowledge cries out: “Each is furthest from himself.”⁷

But we cannot forget that the same text, several pages further, proclaims, in a no less abrupt manner: “I am who I am.”⁸ But if we

consider this last statement, which we have already admitted as evidence, we perceive that in fact it does not intervene in a marginal or incidental way in the development of the problematic but constitutes its ultimate determining principle. It concerns “the sickness of life,” namely, how and why it happens that life turns against itself and finally aspires to destroy itself. What then became apparent was that the whole immense process of *ressentiment* and bad faith that run through the human world and give it its frightful countenance is based on an unshakable foundation, the ground formed by the suffering of one who can no longer put up with himself. If we bracket every empirical or worldly image of that sufferer, “the weak,” there remains a pure suffering whose phenomenological actuality is exhausted in its own affective tonality. Thus we get the idea of an original revelation constituted by and identical with affectivity as such. But it is precisely this revelation and it alone that in Nietzsche’s eyes defines being. “I am” has become the cry of suffering, or rather its very materiality and flesh.

If we then consider Nietzsche’s radical cogito, in which being is established on the basis of a primary affective appearance, identical to its phenomenological substantiality, identical to the texture of suffering and illness, we see that it is not exhausted in the simple proposition of being but in a much more essential determination that refers and gives being to itself as it is. Since in fact representation is dismissed and appearance is no longer the simple appearance of what is enigmatically left behind, unexplored in itself by the flash of ecstatic lighting, since what appears is no longer separable from appearing, which no longer stands beyond it in its difference, since therefore what appears is now appearance itself in the original self-affectation of its affectivity, then being in fact is that appearing and is no longer passed on by it as what simply and generally *is*, but, *thrown into and returned to itself, handed over and bound to itself and therefore experiencing itself and being nothing but that pure self-experience, it is what it is*. In and by suffering, being’s proposition is no longer written “I am” but, decisively, as Nietzsche wanted, “I am who I am.”

Obviously, Nietzsche’s cogito too proceeds from a reduction. It is

what remains at the end of the universal shake-up. This shake-up, brought to light in the hyperbolic analysis of weakness, is no longer doubt but despair, in the very heart of suffering, born by it, its project-desire to escape itself, life's mad decision to break the bond binding it to itself and constituting its essence. What remains at the end of the shake-up is precisely that bond, stronger than the project to break it, making that project be weakness—being's self-bond as the suffering that throws it into itself, which can never be abolished: "I am what I am" forever, forever renewed, in the eternal return of the same, of the Same that I am, since I am what I am.

What results from, or rather what precedes and permits the fact that the Nietzschean reduction is life's sickness and freedom, is Nietzsche's crucial intuition in which he always understands life on the basis of itself, as what proceeds and is deployed from itself. What this deployment means and what it consists of is shown by the interpretation of life's essence as will to power: deployment is not an ontic process or its release; rather, it qualifies the original structure of being, the structure of absolute subjectivity as coming into itself in self-increase.

Nietzsche's thought is a thought of plenitude. Plenitude is not a state. It is the coming into itself of what never stops coming to itself and, in that way, of being what it is. Being what it is, Nietzsche's being is therefore never "being," in tautology, but in becoming as self-becoming, life's Present, the eternal coming to itself. Opposite sickness ("those . . . who never live in the present") Nietzsche places the essence of that present; once again, life: "We, however, *want to become those we are*—human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves."⁹ This plenitude of life, in which life gives itself to itself as that of which it is full and overfull, is what religion originally aims for, that to which it is the prelude: "Perhaps religion could have been the strange means to make it possible for a few single individuals to enjoy the whole self-sufficiency of a god." So that one might ask, "Would man ever have learned without the benefit of such a religious training and prehistory to experience a hunger and thirst for *himself*, and to find satisfaction and fullness in *himself*?"¹⁰

With this metaphysics of plenitude a new metaphysics arises before us. How, if life is self-affection and as such the profusion of self in self, is something like lack and need still possible? "Need is considered the cause why something came to be; but in truth it is often merely an effect of what has come to be."¹¹ What has come to be, life in its inner edification, what it gives itself, namely itself—that is exactly what it desires, as "need for self," as "hunger and thirst for self," as the historicity of the absolute, the eternal coming into itself of what never ceases to come to itself as what it is. As pure self-adhesion, being is nothing but desire for self, nothing but pure self-adhesion. That thought came to Nietzsche to celebrate the New Year at Genoa in January 1882: "*Amor fati*: let that be my love henceforth! I do not want to wage war against what is ugly. I do not want to accuse; I do not even want to accuse those who accuse. *Looking away* shall be my only negation. And all in all and on the whole: some day I wish to be only a Yes-sayer."¹² The thought of *amor fati* is the thought of the eternal return. The response to "the question in each and every thing, 'Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?'" comes from the innermost structure of life and its self-affection: "How well disposed would you have to become to yourself and to life *to crave nothing more fervently* than this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal?"¹³

Life's plenitude, its eternal coming into itself, makes its ultimate image, nobility, transparent. The fact that it is the desire and embrace of self means, negatively, that it passionately refuses to refuse itself: "It will always be the mark of nobility that one feels no fear of oneself, expects nothing infamous of oneself."¹⁴ On the contrary, it is a property of weakness, as of all the negative virtues engendered by it, to have reservations about life in regard to itself and the constitutive movement of its essence, by which it never ceases to come to itself and to give itself to itself as it is: "I do not wish to strive with open eyes for my own impoverishment; I do not like negative virtues—virtues whose very essence it is to negate and deny oneself something."¹⁵

Whether rightly or wrongly, this is the real reproach addressed to Christianity, the reproach of not adhering to that process of adhesion to self and life, a reproach that, for once in a lighthearted, humorous

fashion, is brandished by the antithesis of antiquity: "[Christianity] destroyed the faith in his 'virtues' in every single individual; it led to the disappearance from the face of the earth of all those paragons of virtue of whom there was no dearth in antiquity—those popular personalities who, imbued with faith in their own perfection, went about with the dignity of a great matador."¹⁶ Life is so certain of itself in its unconditional self-adhesion that the "preachers of morals," all who stubbornly "find nothing good in life," are liars: "Actually, they are overwhelmingly sure of their life and in love with it."¹⁷ In antiquity itself, Stoicism was merely the lying misrepresentation of life's primal certainty, which precedes and secretly inhabits every stance taken in regard to it: "We are *not so badly off* that we have to be as badly off as Stoics."¹⁸

The radical phenomenological significance of the structure of being as life, its unconditional coming into itself in all the points of its being in the self-certainty of self-increase, introduces us to the heart of Nietzsche's problematic of values. The question of value is immediately doubled because every value proceeds from a prior evaluation that founds it and thus refers to an ultimate principle of evaluation, which is nothing but life. Why does life make evaluations? How does it determine those values? Does the principle of every evaluation, of all values, have a value itself? But if that is the case, what gives *it* that value, what principle other than itself whose own value would then become a problem? Or does *it* confer value on *itself*? For if the principle of all evaluation was itself valueless, what value would its own evaluations have, and more important, how would the idea of such an evaluation or of something like value in general even come to mind?

Nietzsche responded precisely to all these questions. Things, beings in general, do not in themselves possess any value. *Nature has no value*. Life alone attributes to things all the values they are capable of bearing: "It knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is *value-creating*." How does it know? Because it feels it: "The noble type of man [and we know that 'the noble' is merely an image for life] feels [*fühlt*] *itself* as determining values." But what

exactly, then, does it feel while it is determining values? Answer: itself. That is what life feels, since it feels itself and its essence resides in self-affection, which determines values, so that those values, originally being only what life feels as it feels itself, are originally nothing but life itself and its content. Reestablished in its entirety, the text we are discussing says: "It knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is value-creating. *Everything it knows as part of itself it honors: such a morality is self-glorification.*"¹⁹

The thing that life finds in itself is not simply what constitutes its momentary content. For the content is such only insofar as it gives itself to life to be felt as what life itself is, insofar, therefore, as it comes to itself and never ceases to come to itself as in itself, insofar as its "feeling of that content" is a "self-feeling itself." Ultimately, what life feels is itself in that ultimate sense; it is the fact of feeling itself. Consequently, what life honors, that of which it is the glorification, is its own essence. That is why the next part of the text, which proceeds to enumerate everything that life finds in itself, honoring and glorifying it, enumerates everything but the characteristics proper to that life and the circumstances that it traverses. What the text tirelessly repeats are the original phenomenological structures of life in general, the ontological determinations constitutive of its essence: "Such a morality is self-glorification. *In the foreground there is the feeling of fullness, of power that seeks to overflow, the happiness of high tension, the consciousness of wealth that would give and bestow.*" If a particular experience or action is presented in the enumeration and comes to reclaim its part of the praise, what is really at stake once again is the essence of life: "The noble human being, too, helps the unfortunate, but not, or almost not, from pity, but prompted more by *an urge begotten by excess of power.*"²⁰

We said that every value proceeds from and depends on a prior evaluation. Now we see that the opposite is true. The original evaluation is life's self-glorification. It establishes the ontological characteristics of life as positive values, all those characteristics that together form its essence—power, happiness, plenitude, will to give and squander, superabundance, force, needs born of the superabundance

of force. But this evaluation, the position of those values, is really rooted in those values, or rather in what they glorify and valorize, in life itself and its essence. It is life itself—life's original, unconditional, and eternal coming into itself, making life life—that has value originally and unconditionally, and thus constitutes the principle of every possible evaluation and value—values that are nothing but the repetition, in the mode of archetypal unreality, of the living actualizations from which they proceed and whose eventual repetitions they will subsume under themselves. Thus there are two series of values: first, what originally has value before every act of evaluation and valorization; second, the values that result from that act as the archetypal representation of that from which the act itself proceeds.

Why does the original, unconditional, and eternal coming into itself of life, making life life, have value absolutely? Because "the good" . . . that is to say, the noble, powerful, high-stationed and high-minded . . . felt and established themselves and their actions as good."²¹ "The 'well-born' felt themselves to be 'happy.'"²² On the basis of this primal experience in which the good feel themselves to be good and the well-born feel themselves to be happy, the "noble mode of valuation" is produced. This mode of valuation spontaneously formulates "its positive basic concept" of good, "filled with life and passion through and through," which is nothing but the doubling in immediate speech of what is spoken in it: "we noble ones, we good, beautiful, happy ones!"²³ "Good" means nothing but the self-feeling of those who, feeling themselves in this way, then feel good, the self-experiencing of those who, experiencing themselves in this way, then experience themselves as happy. "Good" means the essence of life.

Why is life's coming into itself the good? Why is life good? Because in the self-suffering that constitutes it life's coming into itself is its delight in itself and as such pure delight, Happiness. Good! Happiness is good.²⁴ Because life's essence contains happiness as its necessary product, it is good.

Original phenomenality, truth in an absolute sense, resides in life's essence. In this absolute sense, Truth is Life. In turn, "the good"

formulate that truth, consubstantial with life's essence, consubstantial with their being: "We truthful ones."²⁵ By that, they do not mean that they tell the truth and despise lies but first and essentially that they are in themselves Truth, from top to bottom, in the inmost depths of their being, Truth in its original form, as it inhabits and enables every conceivable form of truth: in themselves they are Parousia. "*Gennaios*," says Nietzsche, "'of noble descent' underlines the nuance 'upright' and probably also 'naive'"; that is why "the noble man lives in trust and openness with himself"²⁶—so that this openness with himself is merely the consequence of, or better yet the way of naming, life's original relationship with itself as consisting of absolute Truth or its natural essence, what it is "by birth."

Nietzsche's commentary on the word *esthlos* indicates that the capacity to speak the truth, primarily the truth about oneself, and more important, to speak oneself as truth, is based on the original precondition of Life as absolute Truth and by the same token the original essence of being itself and of reality. *Esthlos* was coined by the Greek nobility to designate itself: "The root of the word . . . *esthlos*, signifies one who *is*, who possesses reality, who is actual, who is true; then, with a subjective turn, the true as the truthful."

But if each person in himself is the Parousia of being and contains its essence, how can one claim that "each is furthest from himself"? Has Nietzsche grossly contradicted himself? Or did he mean to say two totally different things? Or in that apparent contradiction did he mean one and the same thing?

Insofar as life is radically immanent, excluding ek-stasis and by the same token everything pro-posed-before, outside any exteriority, according to the variable modes of a proximity that has its essence in and is identical to distancing, each one, insofar as he is alive and therefore never stands in the proximity of distance but far from it, much further than the furthest horizon—each one is in fact "furthest from himself." On the other hand, insofar as he stands before himself and takes himself as what is there, as that man at a certain moment of his life, in a certain situation that itself results from a certain state of things, he can do nothing but take himself for other than what he is

("We *have* to misunderstand ourselves"),²⁷ for other than the eternal and unconditional coming into itself of life *as precisely what it is*. That is why the Greeks erected a theater, isolating the stage with high walls, forever separating it from the city, because everything we experience in what is called life—daily life and its rounds, the empirical individuals we think we see and know, everything that proposes an aspect or face in ek-stasis—must be put aside and ignored (if necessary, covered with a mask) if life's coming into itself in the sole conceivable form of its suffering and joy is to be accomplished and Dionysus is to be present.

Therefore, knowledge is not what brings us closer to the Essential, by degrees and the progress of increase and at the limit "immediate" proximity. Instead, knowledge stands infinitely and necessarily distant. Nietzsche justly expressed his "mistrust of the *possibility* of self-knowledge which went so far that even in the concept of 'immediate knowledge' . . . I sensed a *contradictio in adjecto*."²⁸ But shortly after this critique he affirms an absolute certainty inherent in and constitutive of life's essence, unconditionally rejecting all ek-stasis, even the possibility of seeking, approaching, finding, or, on the other hand, leaving and losing oneself. After denouncing aspiration to noble values ("Just this need *for* what is noble is fundamentally different from the needs of the noble soul itself and actually the eloquent and dangerous mark of its lack"), the text brusquely unveils the essence of the noble soul, or, as always, life: "*some fundamental certainty that a noble soul has about itself, something that cannot be sought, nor found, nor perhaps lost.*"²⁹

Life's being-with-itself, that way of being what one is so that one cannot aspire to, desire, or refuse it, so that desire is perhaps nothing but the untiring accomplishment of that being-with-oneself, that suffering what one is, delighting in and loving it, is expressed by Nietzsche in a previously unheard-of concept of respect in which being's original structure presents itself as the primary saying of ethics: "*The noble soul has reverence for itself.*"³⁰ Nietzsche also expresses this reverence or self-respect as "faith in oneself, pride in oneself."³¹ The inner essence of this faith, pride, or self-confidence, being's

Parousia in itself, allows us better to understand "egoism," the egoism of the stars, and explains, negatively, the reiterated critique of the "*désintéressement*" that claims to bypass the law of being that throws it into itself to fill it with what it is.³²

We must keep in mind that being's Parousia in itself is not knowledge and in fact excludes it, knowing nothing of it or even its possibility, that in this sense it is pure ignorance, if we are not to misunderstand life's absolute *certainty*, in Nietzsche's sense of the word, a certainty equivalent to the essence of life itself, its being-with-itself as living. Life's ignorance is its naiveté and more precisely explains why, never lifting itself out of itself, it cannot see, perceive, or understand itself as what it is. "Exceptional people," says Nietzsche, "do not see themselves as the exception." The superior nature, whose taste tends toward precisely the exceptional, "usually believes that the idiosyncrasy of its taste is *not* a singular value standard; rather, it posits its values and dis-values as generally valid." It does not compare anything because it does not know anything. It does not know because it is pathos and because, bound in itself and experiencing only itself, passion believes in nothing but itself; it "assumes that its own passion is present but kept concealed in all men."³³ This is also why life has such trouble imagining anything whose essence is the negation of its own. "Among the things that may be hardest to understand for a noble human being is vanity."³⁴ What is inconceivable is the structure of a being whose being is not appearance, a structure, however, whose reign is omnipresent wherever knowledge extends its essence since being necessarily escapes knowledge—since each is furthest from himself.

With Nietzsche, following Schopenhauer's founding work, what comes forth is the fact that *the essence of truth does not reside in knowledge or its foundation*. This is the crucial mutation, the displacement of original phenomenality, identical to truth, from the center of ek-stasis to the essence of life. If knowledge's ultimate meaning, being's Parousia, still remains possible, it can be so only in and by life. "*Life as a means to knowledge*"—this is the discovery of *The Gay Science*, celebrated in lyrical terms: "ever since the day when the great

liberator came to me: the idea that life could be an experiment of the seeker for knowledge."³⁵ But such knowledge is possible only if it proposes nothing but itself, no object, if it is not a dehiscence but life's own essence: "We ourselves wish to be our experiments."³⁶ Gay science does not mean happy science, the joy of knowing, of pursuing a fruitful theoretical task. It is a knowledge that consists of gaiety, a knowledge whose sapient essence is exhausted in the relevant phenomenonality of affectivity as such.

For Nietzsche, therefore, there are two dissimilar and incompatible truths. In light of this double truth, the contradictions that affect the apparent content of Nietzsche's discourse on truth dissolve. Juxtaposed with the celebration of the truthful essence of life, the critique of ecstatic knowledge is radical. In *The Gay Science*, the necessary impossibility of knowing oneself is explicitly referred to this radical critique: "'Everybody is farthest away—from himself'; all who try the reins know this to their chagrin, and the maxim 'know thyself' addressed to human beings by a god, is almost malicious."³⁷ The reason why the Socratic maxim has no meaning in Nietzsche's eyes and why its failure, far from concerning the inner essence of life or the self as living self, stems precisely from knowledge and merely expresses its impotence—the ignorance of knowledge itself. This is exactly what is shown by the critique of Socrates. In short, Socrates claimed to judge life's primal knowledge by the yardstick of that secondary knowledge, science. Thenceforth he no longer understood the perfection of immediate action in the absence of all knowledge, seeing life's perfection merely as the sign of ignorance and absurdity. "To his astonishment he perceived that all these celebrities were without a proper and sure insight, even with regard to their own professions, and that they practiced them only by instinct. . . . Wherever Socratism turns its searching eyes it sees lack of insight and the power of illusion; and from this lack it infers the essential perversity and reprehensibility of what exists."³⁸

The critique of knowledge concerns ordinary consciousness and even consciousness in general as well as its systematic development in

science. What disqualifies every mode of knowledge, spontaneous or reflective, what situates it immediately outside of the important and in the inability ever to encounter it is the necessary impossibility of life's ever appearing in the open center of ek-stasis. The critique of knowledge has an a priori, the *a priori* of life's essence. Solely he who imagines life's essence understands a priori why knowledge and especially science inevitably lack it: "The problem of science," writes Nietzsche in a crucial proposition, "cannot be recognized in the context of science."³⁹ Anyone who "knows," as long as he lives in the intention to know and allows himself to be guided by it, does not know that he knows nothing, nothing essential, and he would never know it if the essential, the essence of life, were not given to him elsewhere, in and by that essence.

No less important, aphorism 344 of *The Gay Science* declares: "Those who are truthful in that audacious and ultimate sense that is presupposed by the faith in science *thus affirm another world* than the world of life." Nietzsche calls life's other "metaphysics." Consequently, knowledge, science, truth (the truth of knowledge and science) are all metaphysics. Quoting aphorism 344 of *The Gay Science* ("It is still a *metaphysical faith* that underlies our faith in science"), *The Genealogy of Morals* denounces "the faith in a *metaphysical* value, the absolute value of *truth*,"⁴⁰ since that truth is not the truth of life. For it is precisely life's truth that condemns knowledge's truth and deprives it a priori of any real content.

Knowledge not only misunderstands life's original essence but arises from it in reality since it results from a life turned against itself, a reactive life, inhabited by *ressentiment*, secretly aspiring to be rid of itself. What ultimately determines the project of faith in knowledge, the project of science, is therefore weakness. Nietzsche's disconcerting but constant intuition is that a sick life is the origin of the grandiose productions of human knowledge, especially science: "Science rests on the same foundation as the ascetic ideal: a certain *impoverishment of life* . . . the affects grown cool." Again: "Observe the ages in the history of people when the scholar steps into the

foreground: they are ages of exhaustion, often of evening and decline; overflowing energy, *certainly of life* and of the future, are things of the past."⁴¹

When life loses the self-certainty of which it consists (i.e., when it is no longer there), a rigorous ontological situation occurs, the situation discovered by the scientific view of the world, a world where everything is objective, where there is nothing subjective. Speaking of "the objective person," who is "only an instrument," "a *mirror*," who "is no 'end in himself,'" Nietzsche adds: "Whatever still remains in him of a 'person' strikes him as accidental . . . arbitrary . . . disturbing; to such an extent has he become a passageway and reflection of strange forms and events."⁴²

Man is therefore no longer the dwelling where being comes into itself in Life's absolute subjectivity. He is no longer its historicity, its Parousia; he is no longer, says Nietzsche, a "child of God." He has become "more arbitrary" and, in conformity with a tendency to "self-belittlement," which has "progressed irresistibly since Copernicus," something really small, something objective and consequently an infinitesimal parcel of the objective universe, that universe whose astronomy, Kant, as quoted by Nietzsche, confessed, "destroys my importance."⁴³ The insertion of life, stripped of its inner essence, into the scientific domain makes it explicable by science, so that "the cheerfulness of the *theoretical man* . . . believes that it can correct the world by knowledge, guide life by science, and actually confine the individual within a limited sphere of solvable problems, from which he can cheerfully say to life: 'I desire you; you are worth knowing.'"⁴⁴

However, life is not susceptible to being known. This is why the scientists "cease to be of any use precisely where the '*great hunt*' . . . begins," that hunt whose "predestined hunting ground" is "the human soul . . . the range of inner human experiences reached so far, the heights, depths, and distances of these experiences, the whole history of the soul *so far* and its as yet unexhausted possibilities."⁴⁵ The strange, hard judgments pronounced by Nietzsche in regard to scientists—"their 'scientific impulse' is their boredom";⁴⁶ "they are

all losers who have been *brought back* under the hegemony of science"—⁴⁷ can all be reduced to tautological propositions that express only one observation: life's pure and simple exteriority to the domain of science and knowledge in general.

By contrast, philosophy's task, which "demands . . . a judgment, a Yes or No, not about the sciences but about life and the value of life," appears strange and in fact is not really a judgment but designates something that necessarily escapes every theory—a mode of life. "The genuine philosopher . . . feels the burden and the duty of a hundred attempts and temptations of life—he risks *himself* constantly, he plays the wicked game."⁴⁸ The fact that life essentializes itself as the other of knowledge and its developments and that life's essence, in its original affectivity, is man's innermost being is presented to us by the mythical world of Greece in an archetypal image: "Nature, as yet unchanged by knowledge, with the bolts of culture still unbroken—that is what the Greek saw in his satyr . . . the archetype of man, the embodiment of his highest and most intense emotions."⁴⁹

But is it really science or knowledge that is called into question in all these texts where the traditional concept of truth is tossed and overturned? Isn't it really life itself, or more precisely its deteriorating forms, since humanity's theoretical thought draws its final motivation from weakness and is determined by it? But what is weakness? Not, as we have already said, a form of life, of decadent life, as might be understood from a cursory reading, but life's anti-essence, its project, at any rate; the project of breaking immanence. Such a break is nothing but *ek-stasis*. It is precisely when the ecstatic process of knowledge turns toward life, as occurs in the imperative "Know thyself," that their mutual incompatibility becomes totally obvious. Nietzsche recognized this when he disputed the existence of *immediate knowledge*, and it is shown even more radically by weakness itself as *life's impossible ek-stasis*. But if life and ecstatic dehiscence are incompatible, how can they live together in man? How are we to understand their relationship?

Nietzsche's genius was to have immediately understood the prob-

lem left hanging by Schopenhauer and to have instinctively responded with an as yet unheard-of answer, which allowed a radical phenomenology to return to being's ultimate foundations. For Schopenhauer, "the world" was "will and representation"; that is, two mutually incompatible and irreducible essences since "will" contains no representation and representation no will, that is, no power. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, will became Dionysus, life's essence, the way that life never ceases to impress itself according to the eternal play of the fundamental tonalities of suffering and joy. Representation became Apollo, or rather, and this was Nietzsche's second contribution, the project of exteriority is never left to itself and its illusory autonomy but is grasped in its essential imbrication with affectivity, or rather in its own affectivity. And this is because the ecstatic explosion that never ceases to bring forth a world and the center of all possible affection also never ceases, in the untiring accomplishment of its transcendence, to self-affect itself and thus to experience itself as life. Apollo is not simply representation. Nor, as transcendental imagination, is he what ensures the deployment of that representation and its necessary precondition. He is the innermost possibility of that deployment itself, the *Imago* of the world, perceived in its affective Ground.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, the unity of the two principles is far stronger than their opposition. This essential unity constitutes the mainspring of Nietzsche's thought and unites Dionysus and Apollo in a secret affinity. Thus, far from battling each other, they go together under cover of that battle, assist each other, and are born and die together. That is why when sacrilegious Euripides claimed to bend myth to the service of thought instead of allowing it to speak the Dionysiac foundation of life one last time, he killed it along with music. "And because you had abandoned Dionysus," Nietzsche said to him, "Apollo abandoned you."⁵⁰ But the relationship between appearance and its affective foundation is complex. We must relive its history in the problematic of the young Nietzsche and follow it step by step.

At first, not chronologically but as a degree in a series of impli-

cations that the gaze of analysis successively traverses, still entirely determined by Schopenhauer's explicit theses, representation is understood as delivering us from will. But to deliver us from will, representation itself must undoubtedly already be delivered from will. Schopenhauer must give at least this power to powerless representation. As if the fact of posing before itself really voided the power accomplished by the posing of what until then it carried within itself, *as if objectification were a real objectification, a real translation of what until then contained in life's interiority was actually projected outside it, into the outside of a real exteriority*. This occurred, according to Schopenhauer, at least once in the case of art. Aesthetic contemplation is the true objectification, which by placing desire's abyss of horror and pain outside of us, really liberates us from it. This real transubstantiation has the second, quasi-magical effect of transforming the horrible into the beautiful.⁵¹ Thus Nietzsche borrows from Schopenhauer the answer to the "basic" question he asks, "the question of the Greek's relation to pain"—with one slight difference: representation receives the name of Apollo, which means that the world in general has become an aesthetic world whose mere appearance and the effect of a power and beauty belonging to it, since they belong to appearance as such, carry us over the terrors of Dionysus ("the world—at every moment the *attained* salvation of God, as the eternally changing, eternally new vision of the most deeply afflicted, discordant, and contradictory being who can find salvation only in *appearance*").⁵² In this way the final motivation of that "desire for mere appearance," which is also that of art, which is Apollo, is brought to light. For as Nietzsche still says, "The more clearly I perceive in nature those omnipotent art impulses, and in them an ardent longing for illusion," the more he is convinced that "the truly existent primal unity, eternally suffering and contradictory, also needs the rapturous vision, the pleasurable illusion, for its continuous redemption."⁵³

What is this "redemption" if it no longer concerns "will" but what will has become in Nietzsche, the passion of being, its being riveted to itself according to the eternal play of its tonalities? For life no longer has to rid itself of an ontic principle designated from outside,

will, but the inner structure of absolute subjectivity as life; life must be rid of itself. And this is how Nietzsche understands it: "The aforementioned Apollinian illusion . . . aims to deliver [entlastet] us from the Dionysian flood and excess."⁵⁴ Similarly, when in regard to music, the immediate reproduction of life that contains the play of fundamental affective tonalities and their infinite modulation, Nietzsche speaks of the comfort that lyric poetry, the "imitative fulguration of music in images and concepts," can bring to the excessive weight of the Dionysian content, the same word, *entladen*,⁵⁵ spontaneously intervenes ("this process of a discharge [Entladung] of music in images").⁵⁶

Much later, it is significant that the ascetic priest attempts to comfort his countless herd of low-born creatures, all those who suffer from themselves and thus "intoxicate themselves with the poison of their own malice": "Every sufferer instinctively seeks a cause for his suffering . . . an agent . . . a guilty agent . . . upon which he can, on some pretext or other, vent [entladen] his affects, actually or in effigy: for the venting of his affects [Affekt-Entladung] represents the greatest attempt on the part of the suffering to win relief."⁵⁷ The illusory denunciation of the causes of suffering fabricated by *ressentiment* does not change the fundamental situation supporting this whole process, which here once again is the pure and simple fact of suffering, or rather, hidden within it, life's essence as self-suffering.

Discharge (*Entladung*) thus takes on a peculiar meaning when used in regard to what is forever charged with itself. The inability to discharge oneself of oneself, the attempt nevertheless to do so, to project out of oneself the overheavy burden one bears within, objectification, *not in the sense of a real objectification capable of accomplishing the real translation of the inner to the outer but in the sense of a simple representation, the pro-duction of content into exteriority in the form of an unreal image*. One of Schopenhauer's crucial intuitions allows Nietzsche to resolve masterfully the aporetic problem of the representation of "will": the unreality of the world permits the positing in it of desire and suffering insofar as they propose themselves only in the form of precisely that unreality, in the form of a dream. Henceforth,

to discharge oneself of the unbearable load that life, bearing itself, bears *a priori*, is to project its image into a world born of that very projection, a world of dream in which desire, contemplating its own unreal plastic representation, seeks forgetfulness and relief from its sickness. Like the world of art, the mythical universe of Greece is the product of that projection: "The same impulse which calls art into being, as the complement and consummation of existence, seducing one to a continuation of life, was also the cause of the Olympian world which the Hellenic 'will' made use of as a transfiguring mirror." Again: "The Greek knew and felt the terror and horror of existence. That he might endure this terror at all, he had to interpose between himself and life the radiant dream-birth of the Olympians."⁵⁸

The fact that affectivity does not objectivize itself but merely its image and that more important, the process of exteriorization that "throws before" does not throw itself but remains in itself in its very accomplishment, never ceasing to self-impress itself, means that, unreal in its transcendent content, representation is affective in its principle and foundation. This is Nietzsche's primary intuition and his first separation from Schopenhauer's corpus. The dreamer—or if you prefer, the aesthete; or again, the one who perceives the world as it is—is never the simple spectator of what takes shape before his eyes. He bears the original content in himself as that in which he delights and of which he suffers, and finally, as his very life. Speaking of the man capable of artistic emotion, Nietzsche says that "the whole divine comedy of life, including the inferno, also passes before him, not like mere shadows on a wall—for he lives and suffers with these scenes." But since life's essence is the historicity of its own tonalities and since "projecting" its sufferings "outside itself" to "discharge" itself of them is simply leaving them where they are and letting them accomplish their own inner transformation into joy, it must also be said that the basis of our being "experiences dreams with profound delight and a joyous necessity,"⁵⁹ and recognizes the "deep inner joy in dream contemplation."⁶⁰

The critique of Schopenhauer's, and before that Kant's, conception of beauty becomes explicit in *The Genealogy of Morals*. Kant is

reproached with, precisely, confusing “the attribute of the beautiful” with the attributes of knowledge (impersonality, universality), of substituting the spectator’s point of view for the creator’s in the definition of the aesthetic experience. But in this critique the “creator” is not simply, not obviously and explicitly, the creator of the work, the artist. Instead, it is the process of production and representation in general, which is implied in every process of artistic creation (just as that process, in the virtual state and insofar as the world itself is an aesthetic phenomenon, is undoubtedly already implied in every process of representation). Because the productive process is basically affective, its affectivity determines the creator’s act (hence Nietzsche’s irony on Kant’s famous dictum “That is beautiful which gives us pleasure without interest”), but also because the spectator’s being is itself representation: “If this ‘spectator’ had at least been sufficiently familiar to the philosophers of beauty—namely, as a great *personal* fact and experience, as an abundance of vivid authentic experiences, desires, surprises, and delights in the realm of the beautiful!”⁶¹

To discharge life’s overheavy burden in order to obtain its appeasing representation in an Apollonian dream does not, as we now know, destroy the affective basis of life but merely procures the occasion, by producing its dream image, for it to transform itself *according to its own laws* into the actualization of the fundamental phenomenological potentialities that constitute it. This profound view of things leads Nietzsche to be dissatisfied with the Apollonian conception of art because the dream, in its affectivity, leads back to that affectivity.

This going beyond representation toward what, always hidden in it, produces and ultimately founds representation is shown by the genesis of the tragic myth, of which Nietzsche says: “With the Apollonian art sphere he [the tragic artist] shares the complete pleasure in mere appearance and in seeing, yet at the same time he negates this pleasure and finds a still higher satisfaction in the destruction of the visible world of mere appearance.” That is why revelation of the Apollonian image in its highest forms, “being like a parable, seemed to summon us to tear the veil and to uncover the mysterious back-

ground.” Similarly, in musical dissonance, Nietzsche says, “we desire to hear and at the same time long to get beyond all hearing.”⁶² In this way, a sort of circular process occurs in which suffering, to free itself from itself, projects the image of the drama, of the heroes and their suffering (the reflection of its own, its aesthetic and appeasing double) so that as the always present, obscure source of its ecstatic vision, it nevertheless continuously experiences itself in itself as what it is. Thus, Apollo only apparently saves us from the original drama that continues to play in us. So Nietzsche’s word does not ask for salvation solely from “the healing magic of Apollo” but on the contrary to abandon itself to the invisible power that produces it and its own play. But Nietzsche’s last insight concerning Dionysus and Apollo takes the path of individuality, which we too must now follow.

For Schopenhauer, representation was the principle of individuation. In Nietzsche, or to be more exact, only in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the critique of the individual merely takes up that critique of representation, reaffirming that what constitutes being’s reality is situated beyond representation. Admittedly, that representation in its unreality is nothing since we first ask it to deliver us from reality. This triple meaning of representation (individuation, unreality, deliverance), which also constitutes the first concept of aesthetics, determines Apollo’s being and his mission: “Apollo . . . appears to us as the apotheosis of the *principium individuationis*, in which alone is consummated the perpetually attained goal of the primal unity, its redemption through mere appearance.” In a single move, Nietzsche has circumscribed the ontological, esthetic, ethical, and epistemological dimension of the Apollonian, of representation, secretly understood on the basis of its foundation: “As imperative and mandatory, this apotheosis of individuation knows but one law—the individual, i.e., the delimiting of the boundaries of the individual, *measure* in the Hellenic sense. Apollo, as ethical deity, exacts measure of his disciples, and, to be able to maintain it, he requires self-knowledge.”⁶³

The admirable commentary on the third act of *Tristan* unforgettably describes Apollo’s healing work in the light of the fundamental category of individuality.

Suppose a human being has thus put his ear, as it were, to the heart chamber of the world will and felt the roaring desire for existence pouring from there into all the veins of the world, as a thundering current or as the gentlest brook, dissolving into a mist—how could he fail to break suddenly? How could he endure to perceive the echo of innumerable shouts of pleasure and woe in the “wide space of the world night,” enclosed in the wretched glass capsule of the human individual.

The Apollonian myth allows us to escape the overstrong emotion that would break us, by turning our attention toward itself, so that “however powerfully pity [for the hero] affects us, it nevertheless saves us in a way from *the primordial suffering of the world*.”⁶⁴ This “turning” is the illusion by which Apollo saves us: chained to individuals, to the protagonists of the drama, to the stage where Tristan lies motionless and dying (“desolate and empty the sea”), we imagine we see only “a single image of the world” instead of experiencing in ourselves the overflowing effusion of its essence in universal pain. The myth’s “healing magic” also makes us believe that it is “essentially the art of presenting an Apollinian content.”

But don’t these analyses (as in Schopenhauer, those of egoism, pity, and cruelty) already presuppose the secret doubling of the concept of individuality? For in the end, the individual who “turns our ecstasy” toward him, who “binds our passion,” who “satisfies our sense of beauty which longs for great and sublime forms,” who “provokes our pity,” *the individual represented on stage—isn’t he the same individual burdened by pain and wanting to discharge its overwhelming burden?* Isn’t one before us—*before himself*—while the other suffocates from being himself, incapable of initiating between himself and himself that first separation through which it would be possible to escape himself and the oppressing aspect of his being? In a proposition ripe with future Freudianism, Nietzsche speaks of the “*dangerousness* in which the individual lives with himself.”⁶⁵ Thus there is no question of an adventitious danger, not even of a menace bound to that person’s history. The danger is the person himself, his interiority. It is the structure of absolute subjectivity insofar as that subjectivity is inexorably thrown into itself to experience what it experiences and to be

what it is. The greatest danger is life. To this danger Nietzsche says yes. That is the greatest risk he assumes in the *amor fati*, to which he acquiesces in thinking the eternal return of the same, which as we have indicated, is nothing but life’s essence as its infinite reiteration in the form of its tireless coming into itself. This is the danger from which Apollonian art attempts to help us escape. This is the danger to which Dionysian art abandons and confides itself.

Now we can also understand that as with Schopenhauer, there is no single individual in Nietzsche but two: decisively opposed to the individual arising from the ecstatic structure of representation, the individual whose original place, form, limit, and beauty are located in the reciprocal exteriority of each of the pure parts of intuition’s transcendental center is the individual who reposes in life’s essence. But the first, the Apollonian individual, finds his ultimate condition of possibility in the second insofar as the first is only the second’s image, “as it were, the medium through which *the one truly existent subject* celebrates his release in appearance”⁶⁶—and thus the self-image that the Original Individual projects outside himself in an attempt to be rid of himself and his suffering, to be rid of that *original Self that consists of his suffering as life’s self-suffering*.

Thus we must be careful not to be led astray in our understanding of Nietzsche’s concept of individuality by the descriptions of Dionysian art that aim at *Erlösung*, the individual’s redemption as a liberation from the chains of intuitive individuation. But such descriptions abound in *The Birth of Tragedy*. When the Apollonian Greek feels that “his entire existence rested on a hidden substratum of suffering” and that the project of the imaginary is inverted in the Dionysian experience of life and its mystic jubilation, the breakup of the individual is always given as essential to that experience, to the point of appearing to constitute it: “By the mystical triumphant cry of Dionysus the spell of individuation is broken, and the way lies open . . . to the innermost heart of things.”⁶⁷ According to Nietzsche, this is the esoteric meaning of tragedy and the mysteries: to restore in that abolition of a world of suffering splintered into individuals “the oneness of everything existent.”⁶⁸

But perhaps at this point we should recall what we have discovered at the heart of the Apollonian experience. "He shows us," says Nietzsche, "how necessary is the entire world of suffering, that by means of it *the individual may be impelled to realize the redeeming vision.*"⁶⁹ This individual, therefore, is not first a beautiful form individualized by representation; on the contrary, it produces and therefore necessarily precedes representation, always escaping it. This individual is "the primal passion of the world's suffering," seeking to flee itself in representation before consenting to itself in Dionysus. And when the Dionysian experience occurs, deactivating intuitive individuality, what it liberates is that *primal passion of being's suffering as ipseity's essence*. This is why "the suffering Dionysus of the Mysteries, the god experiencing . . . the agonies of individuation" experiences them "in himself." This is also why it is said that "in the heroic effort of the individual to attain universality, in the attempt to transcend the curse of individuation and to become the one world-being, he *suffers in his own person* the primordial contradiction that is concealed in things"⁷⁰—a contradiction that in the text's Schopenhauerian language, signifies that the suffering discovered by Nietzsche in Dionysus is inseparable from the intoxication of his jubilation, so that the historicity of being, in its suffering and delight, is also what makes it a Self and the essence of life.

In the end, therefore, it is the conditions of empirical individuality that are put aside so that Parousia may come: "The dithyrambic chorus is a chorus of transformed characters whose civic past and social status have been totally forgotten: they have become timeless servants of their god who live outside the spheres of society," so that "the shattering of the individual" can only mean "*his fusion with primal being.*"⁷¹ But with the "forgetting" that overtakes the dithyrambic chorus, with the "complete self-forgetfulness" that characterizes "Dionysian emotions,"⁷² we are led back to what we recognized earlier as the fundamental category of life: its immanence. *Reduced to and defined by "self-forgetfulness," the disappearance of the individual signifies only the disappearance of the sphere of thought*, the individual's belonging to being's original dimension as life's affectivity: "The indi-

vidual, with all his restraint and proportion, succumbed to the self-oblivion of the Dionysian states, forgetting the precepts of Apollo. *Excess* revealed itself as truth. Contradiction, the bliss born of pain, spoke out from the very heart of nature."⁷³ The disappearance of the ecstatically appearing individual is the liberation of the individual who as suffering-Self coincides with the foundation of things, and this fact is attributed to the Dionysian musician, who "is . . . himself pure primordial pain and its primordial re-echoing," and to the "lyric poet," who "as the moving center of this world, may say 'I,' " so that "this 'I' (or 'I-ness,' *Ichheit*) is not the same as that of the waking, empirically real man, but the only truly existent and eternal 'I' resting at the basis of things."⁷⁴

Everywhere, the rest of Nietzsche's work clarifies this emergence of the individual at the heart of and as the essential determination of reality. The explicit theoretical position taken in regard to Schopenhauer is concentrated in the critique addressed to "the unprovable doctrine of the *One Will*" and its ultimate foundation, "the *denial of the individual.*"⁷⁵ Because he arises from being's foundation, the individual becomes the principle and criterion of Nietzsche's evaluation. Every form of life that exalts him is exalted; those that menace him are repudiated. The sense of nobility, *the feeling of being a Self, founded on oneself, and thus independent and different from every other*, is merely the formulation of the original essence of ipseity and life if it is true that *self-sufficiency has its ontological foundation in self-affection and exhausts itself in and refers back to self-affection* ("being noble, wanting to be by oneself, being able to be different, standing alone and having to live independently"),⁷⁶ whereas "the internal *mistrust* which is the sediment in the hearts of all dependent men"⁷⁷ expresses life's sickness, the disturbing of the self-sufficiency of the Basis.

It is worth noting that in many passages the individuation of original being is established by reaffirming the radical immanence of the essence in which ipseity is deployed. In this way, the individual essence of every possible action implies the impossibility of that action's being produced in the ecstatic Dimension of phenomenality, the impossibility of its being the object of an appraisal, a comparison,

a demonstration, any knowledge whatsoever. In particular, this is the reason why morality's claim to prescribe how each person should act in any given case is senseless:

There neither are nor can be actions that are the same. . . . Every action that has ever been done was done in an altogether unique and irretrievable way. . . . All regulations about actions relate only to their coarse exterior. . . . These regulations may lead to some semblance of sameness, *but really only to some semblance*. . . . As one contemplates or looks back upon *any* action at all, it is and remains impenetrable. . . . Our opinions about "good" and "noble" and "great" can never be *proved true* by our actions because every action is unknowable.⁷⁸

At the same time that it reveals the true meaning of Nietzsche's refusal of pity, the extraordinary aphorism 338 in *The Gay Science* leads back to the problematic of the individual and his ultimate ontological foundations. The questioning of pity is double. Is it advantageous to the sufferers? To the ones who pity? For the sufferers, the project of comporting oneself toward their suffering as toward something we can assess, circumscribe, explain, comfort, *know*, necessarily mistakes it, mistakes the crucial fact that suffering happens entirely within a dimension to which *there is no access other than suffering itself*. "Our personal and profoundest suffering is incomprehensible and inaccessible." Placed under the gaze of knowledge or pity, suffering is disfigured: "Whenever people *notice* that we suffer, they interpret our suffering superficially." This is why "it is the very essence of the emotion of pity that it strips away from the suffering of others whatever is distinctly personal" and why "our 'benefactors' . . . make our worth and will smaller."

But there is a second, more abyssal reason to reject all pity for the sufferer: the fact that suffering is not only what in its radical immanence escapes every ecstatic approach but that as such, as belonging to being's inner edification and its coming into itself, suffering opens us precisely to itself, being the original experience it has of itself. The pitying soul, who wants to help, forgets that "the personal necessity of distress . . . terrors, deprivations, impoverishments, midnights, adventures, risks, and blunders are as necessary for me and for you as

are their opposites. . . . The path to one's own heaven always leads through the voluptuousness of one's own hell." As the refusal of suffering, as "*religion of comfortableness*," pity is nothing less than the refusal of being's law and its historicity: "How little you know of human happiness, you comfortable and benevolent people, for *happiness and unhappiness are sisters and even twins that either grow up together or . . . remain small together*."⁷⁹

When individuality has been led back to its original residence, life's suffering essence, the relation Dionysus-Apollo can no longer be conceived on the basis of the individual, not only the Apollonian individual of the *principium individuationis* and plastic beauty but the "I" of Dionysus himself and each of his servants. In truth, as has been shown, the relation Dionysus-Apollo is merely Nietzsche's way of interpreting Schopenhauer's relation between will and representation as the relation of affectivity and representation. But such a mutation is crucial not only because it profoundly inflects the general conception of life but, and this is our present concern, because it makes intelligible what remains aporetic in Schopenhauer—the very possibility of such a relation, which the critique of Schopenhauer's theory of repression has shown to be necessarily impossible as long as will remains unconscious. But what does make the imbrication of the world *Imago* and the affective Basis of being intelligible in Nietzsche if not a radical phenomenological thinking that grasps representation's power of production not as an ontic determinant, incapable of *knowing what it does*, but as the Archi-Revelation of the *Imago*, knowing before deploying since it knows itself as imagination in the pathos of its suffering and joy? Nietzsche is the beginning of the philosophical situation in which the junction of two worlds, those of day and night, ceases to be an enigma because the first has its principle in the second and because that principle has in its own way become the focus of intelligibility; that is, a phenomenological creative nature.

Tragedy minutely describes this birth and production of the visible in the invisible. Dionysus, as we have seen, never appears on the stage: "*Dionysus*, the real stage hero and center of the vision, was . . . not actually present at first, in the very oldest period of tragedy," nor,

let us add, will he ever be. The original being of the god is confounded with "those forces, merely felt and not condensed into images," so that the experience of those forces is the experience of the god. This is why the Dionysian experience originally consists of the release of forces, in the "excited Dionysian throng" and its frenetic dances. It is not, however, the simple unfurling of these forces but precisely their experience, the intoxication of their passion, that also constitutes the being of the god and his "inspired" servant. That is why it is said that "in the dance the greatest strength remains only potential but betrays itself in the suppleness and wealth of movement"⁸⁰—because each time the activation of these movements and forces is increased by the Dionysian pathos of the hyperpower that in self-increase throws them into themselves to be what they are.

This Dionysian experience, *understood as experience*, as the phenomenality of force (its *Stimmung*), permits, invites, and entirely determines the production of language and image. "The reveling throng, the votaries of Dionysus jubilate under the spell of *such moods and insights* whose power transforms them before their own eyes." The excess of passion, its overheavy burden (i.e., images of its ontological structure as "self-suffering," as "bearing itself") produces its "objectification," representation's unreality as the world's pure *Imago* and its representations "as restored geniuses of nature, as satyrs"; that is, as its essence. Life's essence represents itself as an individual who bears and therefore perceives that essence: "In this magic transformation the Dionysian reveler sees himself as a satyr, *and as a satyr, in turn, he sees the god.*" He sees Dionysus as the masked hero who actually advances on the stage, not, however, as he is in himself but "simply represented as present." Thus life accomplishes the self-discharge of its pathetic essence in the unreality of self-representation where, as Nietzsche says, "the Dionysian chorus . . . ever anew discharges itself in an Apollinian world of images" and the Dionysian votary continually gives birth to "another vision outside himself, as the Apollinian complement of his own state."⁸¹

The hardest thing to imagine is the phenomenality of the image produced by life, originally reposing in its pathos. By putting that

self-image aside and thus actually producing it, life accomplishes the ek-stasis whose lighting, identical to exterior lighting, is the very phenomenality of that *Imago* and its pure phenomenological substantiality. But since that *Imago* is produced and therefore is never based on itself or its pure phenomenality but only on what never ceases to produce it (on the "Dionysian state"), the world's becoming-visible is the becoming-invisible of its anti-essence, founding and assuring it of itself at each instant. Lighting veils itself, constantly, not as an effect of the finite place of its appearance but because its coming into that place is the dissimulation of the power that produces it—a *dissimulation that is nothing but its Archi-Revelation in the Origin; that is, Dionysus himself, Life's Pathos.*

The image's precarious phenomenality, the world's becoming-visible, is the "Apollinian state of dreams" whose advent Nietzsche described with unheard-of profoundness and subtlety. The "dream state" effaces our entire quotidian world, raising beyond it, as its own precondition of visibility, the horizon that lights it and lets it be there for us. But this world of light is merely the dream of Dionysus, his project beyond himself, and thus the unreal horizon encircling the creatures of that dream, the multiform representations of life. So the more intensely life experiences itself in the pathos of its suffering and joy, the more lively, the more luminous, the more intelligible, are the images in which it projects itself. This world-truth, affectivity's production and radical determination of representation, is brought to light by every form of art, especially Dionysian art: "Precisely through this discharge the intermediary world of the action on the stage, and the drama in general, had been made visible and intelligible from the inside to a degree that in all other Apollinian art remains unattained." "The Apollinian projection . . . is thus illuminated from inside by music."⁸²

But however lively the images, however bright the light in which they bathe, because that lighting self-affects itself, even its most intense flash is inhabited by the obscurity of a primordial Night. Apollo, who in the end is nothing but the Image of Dionysus, is less light than that light's shadow, and we can now observe the three care-

fully distinguished components of the "Apollinian state of dreams": the intrinsic obscurity of beings, the reflection on them of the light and play of luminous forms, the original obscurity of that dreamlike world light. "This is the Apollinian state of dreams in which the world of the day becomes veiled, and a new world, clearer, more understandable, more moving than the everyday world and *yet more shadowy*, presents itself to our eyes in continual rebirths."⁸³ This obscure Apollonian light determines "the character of the hero as it comes to the surface, visibly—after all, it is in the last analysis nothing but a bright image projected on a dark wall, which means appearance through and through."⁸⁴ The way revelation's original essence, as affectivity, deserts the world's phenomenality *to become what does not manifest itself, affectivity*, is explained with essential simplicity in aphorism 179 of *The Gay Science*: "*Thoughts are the shadows of our feelings—always darker, emptier, and simpler.*"⁸⁵

Nietzsche's thought is solar—and as such is easily misunderstood if one fails to note that its brightness does not ultimately proceed from or reside in its light.⁸⁶ At its most intense, as sunlight, it shines forth only as revealed to itself in that invisible dimension of revelation: life. Nietzsche poetically expresses this ultimate precondition of ecstatic phenomenality, that of producing itself only in the actualization of its anti-essence, by representing the sun's fullness as the act of pouring forth on beings originally constituted in themselves as living, as proceeding from themselves and life's essence. Nostalgia for the south is the intimate shiver of joy experienced by someone seeing everything, even the sea, shade itself from the excessive brightness of the "great noon," someone who feels himself to be the accomplishment of that veiling which gives himself to himself in the certainty and jubilation of his own being ("Suppose somebody loves the south . . . as a great school of convalescence, in the most spiritual as well as the most sensuous sense, as an uncontainable abundance of sun and transfiguration by the sun that spreads over [*breitet über*] *an existence that believes and glories in itself*").⁸⁷

And that is really what differentiates the artist from the man of science—the fact that the first stands before the spectacle of the world

as before a curtain whose veil cannot be lifted, with the presentiment that he himself is what always veils the world's unveiling, whereas the second always believes he is tearing off the veils and piercing the secret: "Whenever the truth is uncovered, the artist will always cling with rapt gaze to what still remains covering even after such uncovering; but the theoretical man enjoys and finds satisfaction in the discarded covering and finds the highest object of his pleasure in the process of an ever happy uncovering that succeeds through his own efforts."⁸⁸ Thus, in a single blow the whole of Nietzsche's thought is illuminated, as well as that proposition of the "Attempt at a Self-Criticism" in which Nietzsche, seventeen years after *The Birth of Tragedy*, designates the task remaining to him: "*to look at science in the perspective of the artist, but at art in that of life.*"⁸⁹

Schopenhauer's thesis that life determines representation has therefore acquired a radicalness in Nietzsche that comes from its phenomenological transcription. No ontic agency, will in this case, externally (and what is more, incomprehensibly) manipulates the power of representation. Instead, along with affectivity, the innermost possibility of the exercise of that power is exhibited as its necessary precondition. "Even in the 'simplest' processes of sensation the affects dominate, such as fear, love, hatred, including the passive affects of laziness."⁹⁰ Nietzsche's new concept of intuition, thought, and representation in general has its explicit formulation in an absolutely original theory of vision, which defines it not by the exclusion of its affective determinants but by them, so that the first revelation contained in all knowledge is accomplished not in or before ecstatic lighting but in feelings, which constitute the true eyes of vision, whose perfection, phenomenological actualization, resides in affectivity itself.

Thus we are given a clue to one of Nietzsche's crucial theses: "There are no facts, only interpretations."⁹¹ For Nietzsche, interpretation is bound to what he calls "perspective," which designates an a priori structuring of phenomenality in general since "there is *only* a perspective seeing, *only* a perspective 'knowing.'"⁹² The problem, however, is precisely to understand the nature of such a structuring,

the nature of its "apriority"; that is, what phenomenality it governs. An almost unavoidable error arises from Nietzsche's use of perspective as a complaisantly developed optical metaphor ("a foreground belief and visual evidence belonging to the perspective optics of life"; "for all of life is based on semblance, art, deception, points of view, and the necessity of perspectives and error").⁹³ And this metaphor, so it seems, refers to intuitive vision and its preconditions. For vision is always a "point of view," deploying itself from a "center," dependent on that center for what it sees and the angle at which it sees it. The ek-static finitude, most notably as inhabiting and founding spatial intuition (even if that finitude then borrows its lexical formulations from intuition), is precisely what is implied by the "perspective" inherent in all knowledge and finally by "every interpretation" as such. Thus the perspectival nature of knowledge and representation in general indicates a failure, or more precisely, a finitude, in an unavoidable sense but a sense that must be progressively overcome by multiplying the points of view, the approaches and readings, in a hermeneutical undertaking whose temporal development is exactly the same as that of knowledge and whose ideal end would be "objectivity," a sort of "knowledge in itself" given to an "absolute," "pure subject" who would finally escape his initial restrictions.

For Nietzsche, however, the perspectival nature of knowledge is *not* a characteristic of its own phenomenality but rather what escapes it: its own foundation. "Perspective," therefore, does not mean a "point of view" as source of the split *from* and return *toward* self in the pre-given circularity of ek-stasis: the "point" is rather this whole process's remaining *in* itself. In this way, affectivity determines representation, "controlling," "willing," or "not willing" it, as its formative power and ultimate transcendental condition of possibility. Nor does Nietzsche's "interpretation" mean the distance of free reflection or evaluation but much rather that which cannot itself be interpreted, that which radically conditions representation: "a variety of perspectives and *affective* interpretations."⁹⁴

This, then, gives rise to the astonishing concept of a vision, an eye, whose essence is not light: precisely the concept of all possible

vision or knowledge. Such a concept implies a rejection of the traditional interpretation of knowledge as ecstatic:

These [concepts like "pure reason," "knowledge in itself," etc.] always demand that we should think of an eye that is completely unthinkable, an eye turned in no particular direction, in which the active and interpreting forces, through which alone seeing becomes seeing *something*, are supposed to be lacking; these always demand of the eye an absurdity and a nonsense. There is *only* a perspective seeing, *only* a perspective "knowing"; *and the more affects we allow to speak about one thing, the more eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our "concept" of this thing, our "objectivity," be.*⁹⁵

Thus the conception of representation that rules throughout Nietzsche's work and underlies his most revolutionary aphorisms is the elaboration and unveiling of the concept brilliantly outlined in *The Birth of Tragedy*: the determination of vision by affectivity as the foundation of both its phenomenality and its significance, which is not limited to what becomes an object in any particular case but draws its own generality from that of its foundation. As preconditions of all representation, the universal structures of affectivity and their simple tonalities encompass everything that is, giving it simultaneously its light and an infinite resonance: "Dionysian art . . . is wont to exercise two kinds of influences on the Apollinian art faculty: music incites to the *symbolic intuition* of Dionysian universality, and music allows the symbolic image to emerge *in its highest significance.*"⁹⁶

Thus, though Nietzsche's later work overcomes his early Schopenhauerianism, it leaves intact the thesis formulated in section 52 and chapter 39 of the supplements to the third book of *The World*,⁹⁷ the extraordinary theory of music. Music's generality comes from the fact that it reproduces the affectivity whose tonalities are the matrices of being and laws of its constitution, so that the infinite diversity of everything that is, is reduced, in regard to its way of coming and thus of being possible, to those fundamental affective determinations—suffering and joy, sadness and boredom; so that, for example, the same music expresses the same pathos "whether Agamemnon and

Achilles or the dissensions of an ordinary family furnish the material of the piece"⁹⁸ and so that, more ultimately, everything that is simply represented is represented only on condition of a more original affection whose essence is the essence of life itself.

Determined by its affectivity, everything represented is represented as a *value*. In Nietzsche, this essential modification affects the world of representation since it is really no longer the world of representation but that of life, the world of a representation that has its life in its principle and end. What is posed-before is no longer simple beings, which have no value and *do not exist in themselves*, but precisely *what is there for life*, what is valuable to it and therefore has value—*what "is" through the self-affection of its self-constitution and only under that condition*.

So value is not something added to what has already come to us, already existent as such; it belongs a priori and essentially to its coming and consequently to everything that comes. Scheler, who as we have noted spent more time on Nietzsche than anyone else, made value the correlate of an affective perception, understood by him as the specific opening to the world's axiological determinants (the "useful," "menacing," "horrible," "lovable," "serene," "divine," etc). But every perception is affective, as its own self-affection, and thus, as Nietzsche perceived, the whole world is a world of values, not in the sense of a "metaphysics of values," interpreting the being of everything that is, based on the being of living beings who pose values and for whom there are values, but because of the original essence of being as such.

For Nietzsche, therefore, "value" has three meanings. First, will to power is value as the original self-increase by which being erects itself interiorly and produces itself. Second, values are the titles under which that inner working of being exposes itself: force (as hyper-power), overflowing, overabundance, nobility, egoism, forgetting, beauty, goodness, truth, everything positive (with the correlative horror of the negative)—in short, all the ontological determinations of life, everything that life "finds in itself," and insofar as that finding is intoxication, everything whose praises it cannot refrain from singing

in its self-celebration ("we noble ones, we good, beautiful, happy ones"). Finally, value has a third meaning, designating everything in the world of representation that life represents as capable of helping it increase; that is, self-increase. "Values and their changes are related to increases in the power of those positing the values."⁹⁹ Values, as representation of self-increase's preconditions or of that increase itself, do not signify the primacy of representation and the definition of being by it. On the contrary, they always reaffirm representation's radical dependence on life.

Thus it would be a complete falsification of the Nietzschean problematic to claim to base it, as a metaphysics of values, on a metaphysics of representation, under the pretext that value is bound to representation simply because it is represented, since in fact representation becomes a value only under condition of something other than representation. Such a falsification, the explicit insertion of the philosophy of the will to power in the history of Western metaphysics, which has since Descartes become the metaphysics of representation, is accomplished by Heidegger as follows: bound to will to power, representation really does become value, but the description of value tends to refer it to representation as to a sufficient ontological foundation, which is taken for granted as soon as the essence of value is exhausted in that of a "point of view" and the point of view itself is naively understood as inherent to perception and its proper phenomenality. Whereas for Nietzsche, as we have seen, "point of view" and "perspective" designate affectivity and its determination of all possible representation, its determination precisely as value. Heidegger's reduction of value, by the bias of "point of view," to view itself, to everything in it that takes on a form or face, is explicit: "The essence of value lies in its being a point-of-view. Value means that upon which the eye is fixed. Value means that which is in view for a seeing that aims at something." How this reduction of value to the realm of vision is a reduction to the structure of representation whose goal is to explain by representation the characteristics of value, especially its character of "point of view" and finally its essence, is expressed word for word:

Through the characterization of value as a point-of-view there results the one consideration that is for Nietzsche's concept of value essential: as a point-of-view, value is posited at any given time by a seeing and for a seeing. This seeing is of such a kind that it sees inasmuch as it has seen, and that it has seen inasmuch as it has set before itself and thus posited what is sighted, as a particular something. *It is only through this positing which is a representing* that the point that is necessary for directing the gaze toward something, and that in this way guides the path of sight, becomes the aim in view—i.e., becomes that which matters in all seeing and in all action guided by sight. Values, therefore, are not antecedently something in themselves so that they can on occasion be taken as points-of-view.¹⁰⁰

But when one notes that representation is really a mode of ecstatic phenomenality and thus an equivalent of the *idea*, *eidos*, or *perceptio*, value's reduction to and exhaustive explanation by representation is nothing less than the insertion of Nietzsche's thought into the history of Western metaphysics.

Value is value inasmuch as it counts. It counts inasmuch as it is posited as that which matters. It is so posited through an aiming at and a looking toward that which has to be reckoned upon. Aim, view, field of vision, mean here both the sight beheld and seeing, in a sense that is determined from out of Greek thought, but that has undergone the change of *idea* from *eidos* to *perceptio*. Seeing is that representing which since Leibniz has been grasped more explicitly in terms of its fundamental characteristic of striving (*appetitus*).

Leaving aside the first two empty and tautological propositions (value is what counts, is what matters), the sophism is in the third, which is presented as obvious, as obvious as the first two, whereas it really states something totally different and accomplishes the leap: value is posited as what counts "*through an aiming*." This statement is in direct opposition to Nietzsche's saying that value is posited by itself since "the 'well-born' felt themselves to be 'happy' " and "the good" are those who "*felt . . . themselves . . . as good*."¹⁰¹ *The essence of Nietzsche's "value" is therefore the essence of life, not that of representation*, the representation of a value being merely the representation of a preexisting and presupposed value and *not* its explanation.

The last sentence of the text indicates another sophism, which concerns not only Nietzsche but the interpretation of the whole of Western metaphysics, namely, the equating of representation and *appetitus*. This concerns Leibniz's previously criticized thesis, which finally reduces movement and *appetitus* to representation's effort to full accomplishment and thus to its essence. And in turn, Heidegger simply equates that *appetitus* of representation with the will to power, confounding it with a movement of thinking, with the operation of a conscious intentionality, despite all Nietzsche's statements to the contrary. Commenting on aphorism 23 of *Beyond Good and Evil*, which proposes to establish a morphology of will to power, Heidegger shamelessly writes: "Morphology is the ontology of *on* whose *morphē*, transformed through the change of *eidos* to *perceptio*, appears, in the *appetitus* of *perceptio*, as the will to power."¹⁰²

The error of making Nietzsche's thought an outgrowth of Leibniz's is made even worse by reducing will to power to classical will, to the simple fact of willing considered as a pure determination of thought, and by then assigning that will, whose essence is to will or not to will, a sufficient foundation in representation. The historical point of departure for this new falsification is now Descartes, who at least is at the root of Leibniz's problematic. Thus the sequence that Nietzsche supposedly terminates remains unbroken. The cogito, converted to an "I represent myself," now includes will as a self-representing; that is, as a self-pro-posing to itself in order to assure itself unconditionally of itself and therefore of all things; in other words, as a self-will to self and above all to will, so that the actualization or effectuation of this self-representation as actualization of that will is the actualization of the actuality of reality itself (of what serves as support for every reality): "Will—as self-effectuation [or self-actualization] striving toward itself in accordance with a [self] representation of itself (the will to will)."¹⁰³ The false reduction of will to power to representation, a reduction supported by nothing but a categorical statement, by the pure and simple equating of the being of action with the being of *cogito* (as "I represent myself"), is also described as follows: "The will first becomes essential in the *actualitas*

where the *ens actu* is determined by the *agere as cogitare*, since this *cogito* is *me cogitare*, self-conscious-being, where consciousness as knowingness is essentially presenting-to-onself. Will as fundamental characteristic of reality."¹⁰⁴

To push the reign of representation as the being of all beings to its extreme is to establish its "absolute self-legislation." Then it suffices to say that "self-legislation . . . characterizes the 'will'" in order to find oneself again in the presence of their unity, which defines the basis of German idealism; that is, a subjectivity that consists of the self-re-presenting that wants to represent itself in order to master itself fully in that omni-exhibition of itself, the phenomenology of spirit: "Reason, as striving [appetitive] representation, is at the same time will. The absolute subjectivity of reason is willful self-knowledge. This means that reason is absolute spirit."¹⁰⁵ Now Nietzsche is a Hegelian!

Thanks to a reversal, it is true. But this reversal, emphatically described as a conversion of reason into animality, is no reversal at all; it does not institute any new essence of being that would be truly incompatible with and irreducible to representation, as is Nietzsche's will. Instead it is content to *consider the appetitus of that representation*, the movement of itself toward itself, its will to self (at least to the "self" it represents to itself), and thus poses itself before itself, in and for the (ecstatic) omni-exhibition of itself.

So the action of this will is no different from representation or thought since it is the actualization of their essence, its self-accomplishment, merely the accomplishment of a representation or a thought. The text quoted above on the interpretation of value as point of view is impregnated with this sort of intellectualist conception of action: "It is only through this positing which is a representing that the point that is necessary for directing the gaze toward something, and that in this way guides the path of sight, becomes the aim in view—i.e., becomes that which matters in all seeing and *in all action guided by sight*."¹⁰⁶ For action, in its radical immanence (Schopenhauer and Nietzsche's "instinct"), is *not* guided by a sight it does not contain, so that the exclusion of all sight, seeing or seen, of the

ecstatic structure of representation in general (the nondoubling of force) is precisely the condition of possibility of its exercise and its very essence.

This denaturation of will to power's action, bent on establishing its precondition in representation, can be seen again when, interpreting from the exterior (i.e., from precisely the perspective of a metaphysics of representation) the fact that every overcoming of power presupposes the conservation of the power already attained, Heidegger lays that conservation in the hands of "representative production": "This that is steadily constant [the reserve of power already obtained], however, is transformed into the fixedly constant, i.e., becomes that which stands steadily at something's disposal, only in being brought to a stand through a setting in place. That setting in place has the character of a producing that sets before [a representative production]."¹⁰⁷

Not only is the possession of the already obtained level of power demanded of representation but also the possession of the actualizing power itself, its self-presencing, its self-unity:

The essential unity of the will to power can be nothing other than the will itself. This unity is the way in which the will to power, as will, brings itself before itself. It orders the will forth into the will's own testing and sets it before the latter in such a way that in such testing the will first represents [repräsentiert] itself purely and therewith in its highest form. Here, representation [*Repräsentation*] is, however, in no way a presenting [*Darstellung*] that is supplementary; but rather the presence [*Präsenz*] determined from out of that presenting is the mode in which and as which the will to power *is*.¹⁰⁸

That demand is echoed by this text from Nietzsche, in which the misinterpretation of the essence of will to power (insofar as that will excludes ecstatic phenomenality) is carried to the extreme: "The essential fullness of the will cannot be determined with respect to the will as a faculty of the soul. The will must rather be brought to essential unity with appearance: *idea, re-praesentatio*, becoming evident, portraying *itself*, attaining *itself*, transcending *itself*, and thus 'having *itself*,' and thus 'being.'"

But still more grave than the sophistic interpretation that claims to join the essence of appearance to will to power, only to turn it over to representation, is the interpretation that based on the same presuppositions, refuses that representation or certifies its absence, only to abandon it to the night. The philosophy of the unconscious, of representation, finds its ultimate avatar in modern psychology.

9 *Man's Monkey: The Unconscious*

The systematic elaboration of the fundamental structures of appearance, traced through the analysis of the inaugural problematics of Descartes, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche, now enables a radical critique of psychoanalysis—a philosophical determination of the concept of the unconscious. Freud undoubtedly knew that such a determination was totally lacking in psychoanalysis when he aggressively attempted to rid himself of a question on which his recently founded discipline rested completely: “The further question as to the ultimate nature of this unconscious is no wiser or more profitable than the older one as to the nature of the conscious.”¹ The originality of psychoanalysis is therefore its refusal of any speculative, conceptual approach to the unconscious, turning instead to incontestable pathological material as its only possible key, as the only law capable of explaining what without it would be nothing but incoherence and enigma. This in turn leads to the claim that only the analyst, who through hands-on experience of symptoms and resistances has personally and concretely dealt with the unconscious,² knows what he is talking about, so that he can then laugh at abstract refutations. But the decision to eliminate all theoretical legitimation in the name of

practice is always suspect, and Freud apparently never thought that only believers were qualified to deal with religion.

The unconscious, therefore, has no theoretical existence except as the only possible explanation of the pathological material. But this legitimation does not ultimately draw its authority from that explicative principle but from the pathological material itself, as *incontestable data*. How is the analytical material incontestable? In that it appears. One can verbally reject a philosophy of consciousness, but every psychoanalytic problematic rests on the prior deployment of the essence of the very consciousness it pretends to reject.

Furthermore, Freud explicitly makes consciousness his work's site or source: "The attribute of being conscious . . . forms the point of departure for all our investigations."³ It is true that this beginning has a sort of double motivation. One is explicit and continually repeated throughout the work—the incomplete nature of the conscious data, which remains unintelligible in that state and to be understood demands the intervention of other, nonapparent processes, which analysis, however, proves capable of reconstructing. Even as late as 1938, in the *Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, Freud continues to say: "It is generally agreed . . . that these conscious processes do not form unbroken sequences which are complete in themselves."⁴ But when confronted with such a situation, the philosophy of consciousness suddenly surrenders all its ground, leaving it to a physiological substructure to fill the voids and reestablish continuity, so that the physical organism appears to constitute the true foundation of conscious life, which, whether we like it or not, is reduced to the status of epiphenomenon. Psychoanalysis, on the other hand, puts up an admirable struggle to keep psyche as its explicative principle. Admittedly, it does not avoid classical thought's great split between appearance and being, taking the first as the mere appearance of the second, an appearance that hides more than it reveals or in psychoanalysis, reveals nothing but disguises. But in psychoanalysis, being at least remains compatible with appearance since both of them belong to psyche, so that the unity of psyche, of man and his life, is preserved.

Being, however, is not only compatible with the appearance it

claims to found but secretly stems from it, always arising from and finally being determined by it. For as Nietzsche says: "What is 'appearance' for me now? Certainly not the opposite of some essence: what could I say about any essence except to name the attributes of its appearance!"⁵ This is the real reason why the problematic of the unconscious must seek its origin and foundation in consciousness: not the incomplete and enigmatic nature of the conscious contents but its very existence as appearance, as conscious—consciousness itself as such.

The concept of consciousness is simultaneously ontic and ontological. In its immediate, naive connotation, as in everyday language, it designates *what* is conscious; for example, symptoms, parapraxes, dreams, tics—behavior in general. But the being-given of this analytical given, the fact that it shows itself, the pure fact of appearing, considered in itself and independent of what appears in it (independent of any particular symptom or behavior), is consciousness in its ontological conception, pure consciousness drawing its essence from the pure fact of appearance and identical to it. It may well be that the philosophy of consciousness usually confounds what is conscious with consciousness itself and, in the "phenomena," what shows itself with the very fact of showing, but the latter remains its implicit theme, what makes it a philosophy, what enables and necessitates, alongside the sciences, which always thematize beings, something like philosophy in general.

In any case, beyond consciousness and as its explicative principle, psychoanalysis posits what is not conscious, the unconscious. Just like the concept of consciousness, the concept of the unconscious is equivocal, simultaneously ontic and ontological. In the ontic sense, the unconscious consists of drives and their representatives, unconscious representations with their adjuncts,⁶ the primary processes to which they are submitted (i.e., the mechanisms of displacement, condensation, and symbolization as at the origin of dreams, parapraxes, and symptoms), repressed or phylogenetic contents, a great part of childhood experiences, and so on. But such contents are subsumed under the concept of the unconscious only because they

are deprived of being-conscious as such, of *Bewußtheit*, strangers to consciousness in the ontological sense. What is unconscious is what is situated outside the field opened by appearance and circumscribed by its phenomenality. Since the concept of the unconscious, even if first understood in the ontic sense, cannot take form and be defined outside its relation to ontological consciousness, it is itself ontological.

What does "the unconscious" mean in the ontological sense? Is it more than a purely negative determination, a simple barring of the determination "being-conscious" or "pure appearance" as such? Because the simple fact of not being conscious, of not appearing, is a purely negative determination, because it does not appear "rich in perspectives," we can understand why Freud excluded it from his research, substituting the processes that effectively account for mental content, just as that content is substituted for the simple quality of being conscious, for *Bewußtheit* as such, which is also formal and empty. In this way, psychoanalysis creates a cleavage that definitively separates it from philosophy while simultaneously establishing its own concept of the unconscious: no longer the empty negation of the formal quality of *Bewußtheit* but the whole of the processes to be discovered, whose coherent totality determines the human psyche and makes it what it is—the unconscious as a system, "the system *Ucs*." In the end, what is important are the interdependent psychical contents; their purely conscious or unconscious character is merely secondary. As Freud himself states, "The fact of a psychical process being conscious or unconscious is only one of its attributes."⁷

What a strange doctrine! It starts with a bang, rejecting the traditional primacy of consciousness, replacing it with an unconscious that determines the former entirely. And then it declares that neither the one nor the other, neither the fact of being-conscious, considered in itself, nor that of not-being-conscious, is really important—even though making the unconscious conscious constitutes both the goal and the precondition of its therapy.

However, the discredit heaped on the unconscious *as such* by a theory defined by it, a theory that claims to have more or less invented it, is less paradoxical than it seems. For the pure fact of being

unconscious, considered in itself, is empty only if the antithetical concept on which it is based is also formal, designating pure consciousness or appearance in general, which says nothing about what constitutes being-conscious, the nature of that appearance, the phenomenological actuality and substantiality of pure phenomenality as such. Recall Freud's disconcerting avowal: "There is no need to characterize what we call 'conscious': it is the same as the consciousness of philosophers and of everyday opinion."⁸ The absence of any ontological elaboration of phenomenality's essence correlatively entails the whole indeterminacy of the ontological concept of the unconscious, its abandonment by Freud in favor of the diverse empirical contents that take its place and serve to define it: childhood experiences, repressed representations, drives, and so on. Thus the substitution of the system *Ucs* for the quality "unconsciousness," itself correlative to the quality "consciousness," completes the fall of the ontological into the ontic. This fall cripples psychoanalysis and, removing its implicit philosophical significance, turns it into a crude psychology trapped in facticity and naturalism, incapable of producing any a priori knowledge whatsoever, destined to wander until it confronts those questions of principle, such as the unavoidable question of the relation between consciousness and the unconscious. This question in turn is neither conceivable nor possible without first considering the question of the *ontological* relation between consciousness and the unconscious *as such*.

From the ontological point of view, what does *unconscious* mean? What is the philosophical consequence of psychoanalysis before its fall into ontic naturalism? The research we have pursued makes this series of facts evident. The consciousness to which psychoanalysis assigns insurmountable limits is really the consciousness of classical thought—representation and its foundation, ecstatic phenomenality, whose precondition of expansion lies in the process of exteriority's exteriorization, in the transcendence of a world.

The implicit yet crucial intuition of psychoanalysis, the reason for the immense echo it evoked, despite its insufficient conceptual apparatus, is that psyche's essence does not reside in the world's visible

becoming or in what is ob-jected. As a radical refusal of ecstatic phenomenality and its claim to define psyche's essence, the unconscious assures man of a hold on his most intimate being: *the unconscious is the name of life*. In this regard, Freud is placed directly in the train of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche (and Descartes too, since "soul," in the radical reduction of the first two Meditations, arrives at its essence through the rejection of every worldly dimension and of worldliness as such). He belongs to the subterranean current that at the very heart of a philosophy that confines being to exteriority, knowledge, and finally science relentlessly works for the recognition and preservation of the domain of the invisible, the hidden phase of things.⁹

But as soon as the unconscious is glimpsed in the positivity of its primal ontological essence, its significance doubles; the so-called formal and empty concept demands a complex elucidation. For the unconscious is not merely representation's other, the name of life. Inherent in the sphere of representation itself and its essence there is, as we have shown, a horizon of nonpresence, the necessary possibility that everything that shows itself could, on the contrary, retire and disappear. But the possibility, or rather the necessity, that what is represented may cease to be, and thus that every ontic content disappear, is rooted in the original law of disappearance that affects every ecstatic presence as such, so that the locus of light itself is wrapped in shadow, and beings continually disappear in the unconscious because of a law that is not primarily their own.

Hence, in virtue of pure phenomenality's structure and its division according to the co-original dimensions of representation and life, the ontological concept of the unconscious also has two fundamentally different meanings, depending on which of those dimensions it refers to. On close examination, the unconscious, as it is usually understood, as the pure and simple negation of phenomenality, as barred consciousness ($Ucs = \overline{Cs}$), is seen only in relation to representational consciousness. This unconscious abolishes the light of representational consciousness *but is inherent to it*, as its limit, as the horizon of nonpresence that surrounds every ecstatic presence

and determines it as essentially finite. This co-inherence of ecstatic presence and nonpresence founds the incessant transformation of one into the other, by virtue of which every appearance in the world is also a disappearance, just as the destiny of everything that is there rests on the foundation of such a co-inherence,¹⁰ as pure ontological law: the destiny of living and dying. In Freudianism, the essential question concerning the transformation of the unconscious into consciousness and vice versa ($Ucs \rightleftharpoons Cs$) here finds its a priori ontological condition of possibility. In conformity with this possibility, such a transformation is both reversible and absolutely free; every unconscious content can take on the opposite quality of consciousness and enter the light; every conscious content is destined to leave it and return to the unconscious.

This unconscious, which for simplicity we will call representational unconscious ($Ucs = \overline{Cs}$), has nothing to do with the unconscious that secretly refers to life's essence. The bar placed on phenomenality concerns only representational phenomenality, and its rejection liberates appearance's original dimension in which being reveals itself to itself outside and independent of ek-stasis, in the radical immanence of its self-affection as life. Because being, in the original essence of its self-appearance, expels ek-stasis, the possibility of its showing itself in ek-stasis is necessarily excluded. The essential question in Freudianism concerning the reciprocal transformation of consciousness into the unconscious and vice versa now gets a completely different solution: from being possible, it becomes absolutely impossible ($Ucs \nrightarrow Cs$). The mystery of the double destiny assigned to unconscious contents¹¹ (for some, under suitable circumstances, to become conscious; for others, stubbornly to refuse that destiny) now becomes comprehensible. The existence of the second destiny no longer need be explained by some ontic processes invented for that end, by a primary repression that is itself mysterious, nor can it simply be stated as an artificial property of certain drive representatives. Rather, it has its roots in an ontological prescription as a formulation of life's status. Therefore, the Freudian discourse on the unconscious, far from arising solely from the work of analysis and as its

result, secretly refers to being's fundamental structures, which it exposes in its own way. This point must now be established more precisely.

We have already shown how the ek-static site's finitude displaces all representations other than the one licensed to exhibit itself momentarily in that site and how it places them in "a latent state," so that if we consider the whole of our virtual memories, for example, it becomes "totally incomprehensible how the existence of the unconscious can be denied."¹² The ontological significance of the unconscious, as well as its reference to the structure of representation, is here explicit: representability as such allows only one of all available psychical contents to be "known to consciousness." This crucial argument (which, however, concerns only the phenomenality of consciousness-representation) was already formulated in the "Note on the Unconscious in Psycho-Analysis" (1912). Defining "what the term 'unconscious' has come to mean in Psychoanalysis," Freud argues against the philosophical assertion that "psychical" is identical with "conscious":

[This assertion] is clearly at fault in denying psychology the right to account for its most common facts, such as memory, by its own means.

*Now let us call 'conscious' the conception which is present to our consciousness and of which we are aware, and let this be the only meaning of the term 'conscious.' As for latent conceptions, if we have any reason to suppose that they exist in the mind—as we had in the case of memory—let them be denoted by the term 'unconscious.'*¹³

Thus, representivity serves as the point of departure for the psychoanalytic determination of the unconscious. Since it is given, the pathological material (which serves as a basis for all the doctrine's great explicative hypotheses, especially the unconscious) is, as has been mentioned, incontestable. But the being-given of this given is precisely its ability to be represented, to become an object. What is most important is not its pathological nature (like every science, psychoanalysis is forced out of the specific domain in which it claims to enclose itself unassailably) but its ontological (i.e., phenomenological) nature. That such a nature has the traits of and exhausts itself

in ecstatic phenomenality, that this particular given is the given of representation, can also be seen even when it stops being strictly "pathological."

The crucial role played by dreams in the formation of psychoanalysis is well known, but the most important property of the dreamer's mental life is to lose itself in its products to the point of seeming to be nothing but those dream contents and their incoherent succession. The same situation is found in the association of ideas. The representative content is always considered for and in itself; the idea's objective reality is always separated from its formal reality. So it is not surprising that this content, isolated from the constitutive power that gave it birth, a naked presence in a dead objectivity, should appear fragmentary, enigmatic, deprived of meaning, and finally absurd. The idea of an essentially incomplete mental given comes from the privilege Freud confers on dreams and free association as practical supports in the work of analysis.

Here we discover another facet of the psychoanalytic concept of the unconscious: that which designates not only the finitude of ek-stasis, that zone of shadow enclosing every objectal presence but more essentially, ek-stasis itself, the process of objection considered in itself, independent of the objectivity it produces, production as such. Thus it is fitting, beside psychoanalysis's positive genealogy (Descartes, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche), to add its negative genealogy, to take into account the great shortcomings of Western thought from which psychoanalysis proceeds directly and that it unwittingly repeats. For the last word of the philosophy of consciousness, its limit and paradox, the zenith at which it turns against itself and self-destructs, is truly *the unconscious of pure consciousness itself*, the unconscious of "transcendental consciousness."¹⁴ The historical moment of this turning occurs when German idealism, unable to found the principle on which it rests and eaten away from inside by this major inability, falls into nature philosophy, which is that idealism's truth, affirming nothing less than the unconscious of pure consciousness itself, namely, the unconscious of production. This unconscious becomes self-conscious, self-productive in phenomenality and thus

appearing not in itself as pro-ductive (*naturante*) but only in the product, the object, and consequently in its form.

With the unconscious of production, nature philosophy imagines that it has solved the problem left hanging by idealism—how can the principle that produces the world then run into that world as a foreign reality? Precisely because that creation is ignorant of itself and discovers its product, what is there, what stands before it, as an enigma. However, the fact that the latter can be penetrated, bit by bit, that it can be and has been deciphered, is possible only because it is the product of that production and because under the appearance of their difference (the appearance that *is* their Difference), Identity reigns.¹⁵ This situation, in short that of Oedipus and psychoanalysis in general, is explicitly and perfectly formulated in the monumental work of the young Schelling, *The System of Transcendental Idealism*, whose implications are immense.

The historical affinity of nature philosophy and psychoanalysis is mediated by late nineteenth-century psychology, which also provides Freud with his historical support. The first great French work on Freud, *La Méthode psychanalytique et la doctrine freudienne*, by Dalbiez, is interesting because it illuminates certain determining aspects in the ideological context of early psychoanalysis. In an intrapsychical system (where everything is psychical), the “minimum of realism,” to which Dalbiez attributes the destiny of psychoanalysis, arises from the ultimate ability of the psychical process to be ignorant of itself and then to find itself faced with its product as something “real,” as something that comes from it without its knowledge. This is precisely the case in dreams, free association, symptom formation in psychoneurotics, and so on.

Despite the factual air of analysis, what is really at stake is psyche's ontological character as operational and creative (*naturante*). That is why Dalbiez continually advocates a theory of consciousness that variously reaffirms its original unconsciousness. Thus, for example, in our perception of a tree, “We do not recognize our vision; we grasp it after the fact, through a second action.”¹⁶ And this is true not only of “outer sensation,” of vision, but of psychical life in general. The

conception of a color does not exhibit that color; the inherently unconscious conception becomes conscious only after a new, specific act of grasping, which then and only then makes the first conception a “knowing.” The incompatibility of the second act in relation to the first is expressed in its contingency, in the fact that the first does not imply any consciousness, not even ulteriorly: “It is perfectly conceivable that sensation or intellection occurs in us but remains in an unconscious state.”¹⁷

“*The posteriority of consciousness in relation to knowledge*,” which, the author adds, “has been emphasized by the American neo-realists,” is, if we explore its ultimate ontological implications, nothing but the nonphenomenality of phenomenality as such, its veiling in the phenomena (in the ob-stance of the table, of color, etc.).

Psychoanalytic method itself furnishes the most remarkable illustration of this and lends it a semblance of truth. Free association is precisely the incessant coming of each representative content into the condition that is its own, so that the coming itself, as production, always hides itself and disappears in its product. Hence this product, severed from its roots, arises as the non-understood. For it to be understood, the associative processes that gave it birth must be brought to light. Association, in this case, is production itself. The unconscious of production is the unconscious of association. Hence the constant method-determining effort in psychoanalysis to tear the associative processes from the unconscious to which they necessarily belong in order, based on them, to account for the manifest, yet in themselves incomprehensible, contents of mental life.

In any case, the unconscious that proceeds from and is bound to representivity as such is doubled: opposed to the unconscious content that stands outside the field and horizon of intuitive presence (e.g., “latent” memories) is the unconscious of its production—in psychology's naturalist transcription, that of the associative bond as such, “the relational unconscious.”¹⁸ In opposition to Janet, who characterized hysteria as the shrinking of the conscious field, Freud explicitly distinguishes between the unconscious of the facts proper to hysteria and the unconscious of the relation between these facts,

which alone could account for obsession.¹⁹ Similarly, Frink, drawing on Freud's thesis that "the emotional state as such is always justified," endeavored to establish that even when the patient is conscious of the cause of his affective state, he does not perceive that cause as a cause; in other words, it is precisely the relationship as such that escapes him.²⁰

In Freud, the representational concept of the unconscious (its determination by representivity) is overdetermined as a function of the role played by dreams in the development of his doctrine. For the dream itself is necessarily never analyzed since the dream's constitutive intentionality is imagination, which is incompatible with the essentially conceptual intentionality of analysis. Thus, in its specificity as purely imaginary, the dream is removed a priori from the analytical procedure, which can only substitute an equivalent. That equivalent is the dream narration; that is, a text, a group of significations constitutive of language and arising from thought in the strict sense, from a consciousness that aims at an unattainable, empty object, from a sense-giving consciousness, a *Sinngebung*, as Husserl says.

An extraordinary situation then arises. On the one hand, a linguistic formation is substituted for the dream proper, for a pure imaginary that as such has nothing to do with language.²¹ All the categories that concern language are then invested in a given that is incompatible with them. What is merely a metaphor, the dream as the "text" of the analysis, as its object, is taken literally, as an intrinsic determination of that object's essence. The contamination or denaturation of psychoanalysis by linguistics and the whole of the disciplines today associated with it is now possible. In all seriousness, people can now say that the unconscious is structured like a language. In Freud himself, the consideration of words all too often vitiates the delimitation of the real phenomena and the research into their actual determinants.

On the other hand, since imaginal life itself has no word-meaning (like *dog*, as an empty word, without perception, image, memory, or concept), that meaning, created by the specific act of pure thought as

Sinngebung, is absent from the imaginary as such. It is merely one small step from this point to "unconscious" beliefs and speech. Because we think, this illusion occurs constantly, and thinking posits itself and its products as the criteria by which life's other determinants must be measured. The hypostasis of pure meanings, which can accompany everything that is since everything that is can be thought ("everything can be said"), creates an ideal archetypal universe in whose light all life's concrete formations, and even life itself, appear to be lacking something, deprived of the body of meanings that in fact they do not contain.

That group of hypostatized meanings goes to make up the unconscious. For example, the child forms his mother's image, the presence of which is for it at times an irrepressible need. For all that, it does not form the meaning "needing its mother," "wanting to sleep with her," or, to accomplish that, "killing its father." In truth, it does not even know what its *mother*, in our sense of the word, is—or its *father*. "To sleep with its mother and kill its father" then becomes its unconscious.

But this critique, based on the principles of psychoanalysis, must be given its most general scope. Dreams for Freud are merely the prototype of representation, which, as you will recall, Schopenhauer reduced to a dream. The interpretation of dreams was expanded to cover every form of representative life, especially those that precede thought in the strict sense. Thus, not only dream contents and psychoneurotic fantasies but all symbolic formations, products of art, myths, and religious beliefs are submitted to a method forged in the analysis of specific givens.

Everywhere, then, the same gap comes to light, the gap between the concrete aspects of such formations (symbolic, esthetic, and religious), between imaginal life in general, in its essence and modes, and meaning in the linguistic sense, under which one always attempts to subsume it. Such a gap (in which is situated an unconscious constituted of ideal meanings, one that is indeed identical with a language) determines the far-fetched nature of all "Freudian explanations," a nature that their author vainly attempted to justify by claim-

ing that since the subject was ignorant of the explicative principle, he could not help but be amazed by it once it was presented to him.

In this way, one of the most interesting aims of psychoanalysis was turned against itself. It was supposed to define the immense part of psyche that proceeds from its free play, from its most profound impulses—in short, to recognize the crucial role played in life by the imaginary. But this role in the end is measured, interpreted, and reduced to the procrustean bed of ideal meanings. And behind these thought-meanings the outline of thought's objects shows up, which is then understood as the reality principle. In each case, analysis always returns to reality in the most mundane, objective sense, to the most down-to-earth determination. Freud's scientism has already buried life's intuition.

If the ideal, empty meaning, aimed at by thought, is foreign to the imaginary, how much more must it be separate from life itself! For life has no meaning, and since it has no intention (e.g., to form a meaning), it cannot be subjugated to meaning, interrogated or examined in its light, judged or condemned by it. *The loving child creates no ek-stasis in which it could appear to itself as loving its mother, as being able, thanks to the retreat of that ek-stasis, to take a position in regard to itself and its love, nor can it even perceive that love and thus form the meaning "I, a child, loving my mother."* The child cannot perceive, not because it is a child but because it is alive (for Freud, the child is merely an image, as is the animal for Nietzsche), nor can life, since it contains no ek-stasis and thus cannot perceive itself *as such*, not being able to relate to itself, represent itself to itself, "mean" itself, or consequently have a meaning in itself. Meaningless, life need not answer the question of meaning. Life is like a rose: "The rose does not ask why. It blooms because it blooms. It cares not for itself, nor does it desire to be seen."²²

But, one might object, is not the meaning of life the movement of that pure self-experiencing, that pure affection (of the child) reduced to its affectivity, independent of the light of the world? But then a completely different concept of *meaning* reveals itself, and with it a glimpse of the original meaning of the unconscious.

Dreams have meaning; parapraxes, symptoms, the least of our gestures, even silence ("If their lips are silent, they gossip with their fingertips"),²³ have meaning. Forgetting and memories that hide other memories (screen memories) have meaning. Everything has meaning. But in all these cases the meaning of *meaning* is extremely equivocal. If meaning designates an ideal, as in language, like the meaning of the word *dog*, it is the noematic correlate of a signifying intentionality that originally creates that meaning (even though the word can then passively retain its meaning as a given).

What, then, is the critical work of analysis? Does it reveal the immediate meaning as false, barring that meaning and replacing it with another? Contrary to what happens in Husserl's phenomenology, the consciousness that formed the first meaning proves incapable of surmounting it. Only the surpassing of the "I think" and its point of view permits that of the initial truth, of illusion. Concretely, it is analysis that conducts the patient to recognize jealousy as a secret desire to be unfaithful. Nevertheless, when the meaning "desire to be unfaithful" replaces *jealousy*, a conscious idealism is only apparently replaced. In reality, its reign is extended to infinity, and psychoanalysis falls into the direct train of Western thought: what it posits are meanings. The positing agent itself is precisely the power to posit meanings, a *Sinngebung*, a consciousness.

But when Freud says that dreams, for example, have meaning, he means something completely different. He means that a dream content is produced by an unconscious tendency. In the whole process of producing an imaginary representative content by an unconscious tendency there is neither meaning nor a signifying (meaning) consciousness, and therefore there is no "meaning" in the linguistic sense. I repeat: it is purely metaphorical to say that hands speak. "Speaking" is precisely what they do not do if speaking means intentionally creating signification with the inner awareness of doing so. The relation between the agitated state of someone whose hands are trembling and the trembling itself is of another order. It is no longer the intentional relation of signifying; it is an outer relation (one of causality, as the psychologists say) between two blind, "unconscious" events, like

the relation that unites them. Such a relation (e.g., that of the smoke rising over a house and the fire that supposedly produces it) is an "indication." Husserl has admirably distinguished between the relation by which one state of things indicates another (by which words, for example, indicate a supposed psychical state in the speaker) and the speaker's intentional construction of linguistic meaning in the strict sense.

Speaking of psychical phenomena in general, Freud writes: "We seek . . . to understand them as signs of an interplay of forces in the mind. . . . The phenomena that are perceived must yield in importance to trends which are only hypothetical."²⁴ Here, not only is all meaning excluded, but the classical positions are completely reversed: the phenomenon is still really a representative content, imaginary (dream, work of art, myth) or real (trembling hands, psychoneurotic symptoms in general, etc.), but *the power that produces it is not the power of representational consciousness*. So when Freud declares that everything has meaning, that statement, generally heaped with disdain, far from reducing the psychical to something expressible, offered to a hermeneutical reading, instead opens the domain in which there is no intentionality or meaning. Therefore, representation's wholly other must now be the object of our systematic elucidation.

The inclination of the Freudian concept of the unconscious toward the unexplored, because invisible, domain of life can be seen in "A Note on the Unconscious" (1912). The proof or "justification" of the unconscious by the latency of the greater part of the psychical contents cedes almost immediately to a very different kind of consideration. The major argument is no longer based on the resurgence of those contents (e.g., memories) after a certain lapse of time corresponding to a hypothetical psychical state of unconsciousness (without that hypothesis, classical thought is obliged, says Freud, to confide the psyche's essential property, memory, to the physical organism). Instead, the argument is based on *the efficacy of those unconscious thoughts during their unconscious state and thus on unconscious activity*. Hence the appeal to neurotic symptoms, which are not hypothetical, which really are there, and which are continually produced by an

activity of which they are the immediate manifestation and hence proof, even though that activity itself cannot be seen. The entire mental life of the hysteric who vomits because she is afraid of being pregnant "is full of active yet unconscious ideas." The other "forms of neurosis" testify to "the same preponderance of active unconscious ideas." The objection that pathological conditions do not apply to normal psychology falls away if one notes that normal functional deficiencies, "e.g., *lapses linguae*, errors in memory and speech, forgetting of names, etc., may easily be shown to depend on the action of *strong unconscious ideas* in the same way as neurotic symptoms."²⁵

Even more important, normal deficiencies and neurotic symptoms are merely indications of an absolutely general phenomenon, the necessary determination of all representation by a power that itself never is and never can be represented. Freud corrects the classical thesis that latency and unconsciousness, as virtuality, are synonyms for inaction and weakness ("We were accustomed to think that every latent idea was so because it was weak and that it grew conscious as soon as it became strong") by stating that on the contrary, his unconscious "designates not only latent ideas in general, but especially ideas with a certain dynamic character." In fact, with the crucial character of "unconscious activity,"²⁶ the deliberate report of force and power in all its forms outside of representability is prescribed. Thus it cannot be said that an effective action can *also* be accomplished in the unconscious but rather that *only* as such, insofar as the power that produces it coheres with itself in the radical immanence in which it first grasps itself, is any action possible; for example, the hand movements of an agitated person. The mutation of the Freudian unconscious, ceasing to designate the formal and empty negation of the quality "consciousness," taking over instead the dynamism of the psyche, the totality of the "processes" that become the "system *Ucs*," does not mark the fall of the ontological concept into the ontic. (Behind the apparent facticity of this concept hides the meaning of "unconscious" ("pure unconsciousness as such"), which aims at the very possibility of action, its mode of being, and finally the original essence of being as life.)

The difficulty of making headway outside representivity's field and escaping its power can be seen in the article "The Unconscious" (1915). No sooner have the drives been recognized as a "fragment of activity," identical with the original forms of Energy and Force, as representation's wholly other and thus as the most profound characteristic of life and psyche itself, than their inherence in psyche implies on the other hand a reintegration of and secret conformity with the field of representation and its structure and laws—as if psyche were actually confounded with and drew its essence from representivity as such. This important and catastrophic turn in the Freudian problematic occurs with the separation of the drive and its psychical representative. But this representative (*Repräsentanz*), since it is primarily a representation, is understood in the image of representation. In fact, drives acquire psychical existence and reality only as representative, only when they cloak themselves in a mode of being that presents something other than themselves, the mode of being of representation itself.

The commentators have noted this ambiguity of the concept of drives, which on the one hand designates what is presented in the psyche, pure activity and the principle of all activity (and that in the end is what *drive* means in psychoanalysis) and on the other hand what accomplishes that presentation, the presentation as such, in its representational essence. But there is a reason for this equivocation, which every radical problematic must bring to light: thought's own inability to grasp activity, power, and force, substituting for their essence, as soon as they have to be envisioned as psychical, that of representation. Thus, representation reclaims what originally stands beyond it. The unconscious, originally representation's other, now contains representation. The aberrant concept of an "unconscious representation" is born.

That concept contains the two major errors of Freudianism. On the one hand, since there are memories that are not actually present, "latent" or repressed representations, there do seem to be unconscious representations: "Unconscious ideas continue to exist after repression as actual structures in the system *Ucs*"²⁷—as if these repre-

sentations were formed or existed as actual representational contents, independent of the act that forms them, independent of their formal reality; as if the structure of ek-stasis could be unfolded without also phenomenalizing its constitutive phenomenality.

On the other hand, since drives originally signify nonrepresentability ("An instinct [drive] can never become the object of consciousness"), existing only through their representatives, nonrepresentability exists only in the form of representability. What cannot transform itself into consciousness, does, as representation, nevertheless make that transformation, not accidentally but in itself, in its being insofar as it is psychical, insofar as drives have being only in their psychical representatives. The irreducible incompatibility of the unconscious (drives, in this case) and consciousness, the slippage nonetheless of the first into the second by way of the drive's "representative" as its psychical being, the definition of the psychical unconscious by the structure of representation that it excludes ("Even in the unconscious, moreover, an instinct cannot be represented otherwise than by an idea [representation]"), and hence the possibility of becoming conscious for what refuses such becoming on principle, the justification (if it can be called that) of the whole psychoanalytic enterprise, especially of its therapy—all of that is included in this key text:

I am in fact of the opinion that the antithesis of conscious and unconscious is not applicable to instincts. An instinct can never become an object of consciousness—only the idea that represents the instinct can. Even in the unconscious, moreover, an instinct cannot be represented otherwise than by an idea. If the instinct did not attach itself to an idea . . . we could know nothing about it.²⁸

Freud wanted to preserve psychical specificity against all physico-biological reduction, but that was his greatest illusion. Since drives are only the psychical representatives of somatic processes and, according to the "Project for a Scientific Psychology" (1895), physical energies, their psychical being, the being of Psyche itself, is merely the representative of something else, something not psychical but a system of physical energy. Thus the psychical stands for a reality other

than itself; it is the indicator of that other reality; it has only a pseudoautonomy, pseudospecificity, and pseudoreality. The affirmation of the existence of a psychical unconscious is acceptable only with that one essential restriction, namely that the unconscious, the psychical in its depths, is merely a stand-in, an equivalent, a substitute, an ersatz.

Insofar, however, as the psychical being of drives, of the unconscious, and finally of Psyche's depths is understood as "representative," modeled on representation, it is secretly at one with it, with representational consciousness. The unconscious—which was initially nothing but the equivalent and psychical transcription of a physical energy system, wholly foreign to pure consciousness—through the "representative" function it contains and because representivity's essence inhabits that function, acquires by the same token an affinity with consciousness itself, into which it must henceforth be transformed. In one move, Freud hopes to escape biology and establish his method since the unconscious processes are posited as psychical, separated from their physical states only by their resemblance to modes of mental life, which can then furnish the key to their comprehension, whereas the physical approach to these same processes led nowhere. After stating that no chemical conception could furnish any idea of unconscious processes, Freud adds:

On the other hand, we know for certain that they [unconscious processes] have abundant points of contact with conscious mental processes; with the help of a certain amount of work they can be transformed into, or replaced by, conscious mental processes, and *all the categories which we employ to describe conscious mental acts, such as ideas, purposes, resolutions and so on, can be applied to them*. Indeed, we are obliged to say of some of these latent states that the only respect in which they differ from conscious ones is precisely in the absence of consciousness.²⁹

Thus Freud misses Psyche's original essence twice: first by reducing it to physical reality and then to representative consciousness—or more precisely by never overcoming the first reduction by anything but the second, the reduction of psyche to ek-stasis. In fact, ek-stasis

governs the whole analysis. For the strange bridge constructed by the "representative" between the material processes of the energetic systems that it represents and the center where it represents them, the consciousness of philosophy and classical psychology, is in the final analysis based on the secret equivalence of the opposites it unites. And that equivalence consists of the fact that the being of those material processes is nothing but representative being as such, consciousness itself.

The affinity, or rather identity, of material *being* and consciousness entails many consequences for Freud. In the first place, becoming-conscious generally comes to mean becoming-real. Thus, the force, energy, or activity, whose inner possibility resides in the radical immanence for which the Freudian unconscious was originally the image, comes to be defined, on the contrary and in conformity with the tradition, by a process of exteriorization. Not only is becoming-conscious the telos that governs the entire doctrine, theoretical as well as practical since "becoming" expresses itself and comes into being as being-represented, but action itself is exhausted in and coincides with that coming. Proposing its general interpretation of morbidity, the *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* declares: "There is a precondition for the existence of a symptom: *some mental process must not have been brought to an end normally—so that it could become conscious*. . . . A violent opposition must have started against the entry into consciousness of the questionable mental process." And a little further on: "Symptoms . . . are a substitute for something that is prevented from *exteriorizing itself* by repression."³⁰ Through its relationship with exteriorization, within the ontological horizon of a representational metaphysics, that key piece of the doctrine, repression, is explicitly determined and comprised.

Developing the concept of the unconscious, Freud spoke of the "active unconscious thoughts" that determine it fundamentally as Energy. As active, such "thoughts" tend toward their realization. They are tendencies—in such a way, however, that their true activity consists of surpassing that aspiration to reality (the simple status of "tendency") in order to throw themselves into it; that is, into exteri-

ority—in such a way that the process of exteriorization as such constitutes activity as such. Henceforth an insurmountable discontent (that of an unsatisfied tendency) qualifies everything that is not or cannot be thrown into the light of ek-stasis and that therefore remains deprived of that activity of realization, which is imagined as the only possible realization. The intuition buried at the heart of Freudianism, according to which all life is unhappiness, is torn from its contingency when it is referred to its ultimate phenomenological presuppositions—that the inside of the world, the unconscious as such, is separated from reality and thus becomes desire, endless desire. Beyond Nietzsche, Freud once again rejoins Schopenhauer.

Thus the reduction of the fundamental modes of efficacious action to representation's process of exteriorization ends with a representational and finally phantasmagorical theory of desire or wishes,³¹ whose error must be renounced. Admittedly, wishes *are* accompanied by a procession of representations. According to *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the experience of need fulfillment is bound to the image of the object that has allowed or procured that satisfaction. Therefore,

the mnemonic image of [a particular perception] . . . remains associated thenceforward with the memory trace of the excitation produced by the need. As a result of the link that has thus been established, next time this need arises a psychical impulse will at once emerge which will seek to recathect the mnemonic image of the perception and to re-evoke the perception itself, that is to say, to re-establish the situation of the original satisfaction. An impulse of this kind is what we call a wish; the reappearance of the perception is the fulfillment of the wish.³²

Thus, the wish, which is nothing but the awakening and fulfillment of pure need in the movement of original body, hence in the sphere of absolute subjectivity's immanence, and whose "fulfillment" is and can be nothing but this movement and immanent transformation of discontent into pleasure, has its being and history fundamentally altered. It ceases to be life's being and history as self-experience and becomes instead a history of representations, the return of a memory, of a perception, of all those that go together to make up the objective situation in which the primal experience of satisfaction is

supposed to have taken place—as if the satisfaction itself had anything to do with some objective arrangement, with representations or images.

This displacement of the drive of a wish, force, or real movement into a movement of representation reproduces the historical situation already denounced in Leibniz, a denunciation I will not repeat here. But one specific consequence of this state of affairs occurs in Freud—the hyperdevelopment of the imaginary and concurrently phantasmagorical and finally hallucinatory universe. In fact, beginning with the moment when Freud presents as realization of a wish something that has absolutely nothing to do with reality, a series of representations, that pseudorealization cannot help but reproduce itself endlessly. The wish has exchanged its being for a procession of symbols and imaginary fixations whose proliferation lends itself to the play of analysis, which is itself endless. The "ego" must now be sought in the forest of signs and illusions.³³

The essential aspect of Freud's thought remains: the drive representative is not only representation; it is also affect. In this final meeting with the depths of the unconscious and life, psychoanalysis finally gives up its secret. Its explicit presuppositions start to waver. First, the most important of all—the separation of Psyche and phenomenality. For affect is not merely a drive representative. It is actually representation's foundation. All of the doctrine's great analyses, especially those of repression, the destiny of drives, hysteria, and so on—even the psychoanalytic cure itself in its final possibility—establish this primacy, implying that only affect's destiny is important, whereas that of representation is constantly subordinated. But *affect is not, cannot be, and consequently cannot become unconscious*; Freud's declarations are categorical: "It is surely of the essence of an emotion that we should be aware of it, i.e., that it should become known to consciousness."³⁴ "A representation can exist even if it is not perceived. On the other hand, a feeling consists of perception itself."³⁵ *Thus the basis of the unconscious, as affect, is anything but unconscious.*

The predicament surrounding such statements in a philosophy of the unconscious is manifest in the two passages from the 1915 article

"The Unconscious" and the "Note on Saussure." But Freud's clarifications, far from restricting the scope of the thesis, only emphasize it. Noting that in psychoanalytic practice one speaks of unconscious feelings (love, hate) and that one does not recoil before "the strange conjunction, 'unconscious consciousness of guilt,'" or the "paradoxical 'unconscious anxiety,'" Freud sees these expressions merely as linguistic improprieties.

Actually, it is the representation associated with feeling that is or can be unconscious. Separated from its representation, the affect binds itself to another representation, which is then taken by the conscious to be the manifestation of that affect: it is at this point that one calls it unconscious, when that name really belongs only to the representation to which it was originally bound. We see that in this process, the process of repression, the feeling does not cease to be "known." Only its meaning, the representation with which it was associated, has been "misconstrued."

In the first place, it may happen that an affective or emotional impulse is perceived but misconstrued. Owing to the repression of its proper representative it has been forced to become connected with another idea [representation], and is not regarded by consciousness as the manifestation of that idea. If we restore the true connection, we call the original affective impulse an "unconscious" one. Yet its affect was never unconscious; all that had happened was that its *idea* had undergone repression.³⁶

Repression is precisely the experiment offered to us to decide whether a feeling can be unconscious. In the case we have just examined, only the representation was repressed, so it alone is unconscious. But can't repression bear on the affect itself, and if the affect is repressed, doesn't it become unconscious? Confronted with this limit-question of psychoanalysis, and perhaps of all philosophy, Freud's genius responds by citing a process completely different from the one by which consciousness changes to unconscious (which, as a structure of ecstatic phenomenality, actually concerns only representation). What he describes is *the process of affectivity itself, in which never ceasing to affect itself and thus to appear, to be "known," as Freud says, it transforms itself according to the modes prescribed by its essence.*

The crucial addition Freud brings to this history of affectivity, as its historicity, as the historicity of the absolute, about which this analysis has already taught us much, is the emphasis he places on anxiety and the role it plays. For in repression, whereas the representation bound to the affect is pushed back into the unconscious, the affect is not suppressed but qualitatively modified, becoming some other totality. And if it in turn is forbidden, repressed, it and the original affect change into anxiety.

Repression, therefore, does not signify any disappearance of affect or its phenomenality but only a modulation into another affect and finally into anxiety. The movement of life is not interrupted because its phenomenality is not. What happens in the repression of affectivity is instead the declension of that affectivity according to its own potentialities, so that they inevitably turn to anxiety as their common point, as their obligatory site of transition—one is tempted to say as their essence. After studying the repression of a representation, the *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* says,

We have always left on one side the question of what happens to the affect that was attached to the repressed idea; and it is only now that we learn that the immediate vicissitude of that affect is to be transformed into anxiety, whatever quality it may have exhibited apart from this in the normal course of events. This transformation of affect is, however, by far the more important part of the process of repression.³⁷

The fact that anxiety, site of transition and terminus of all affects, is life's medium of exchange is explicitly stated in the analysis of psychoneuroses, especially hysteria:

This affect accompanying the normal course of events is invariably replaced by anxiety after repression has occurred, no matter what its own quality may be. . . . Anxiety is therefore the universally current coinage for which *any* affective impulse is or can be exchanged if the ideational content attached to it is subjected to repression.³⁸

Before going into more detail on this crucial phenomenon of anxiety in its historical connection with Psyche, however, we must eliminate one objection.

Since affect too is a simple "representative" of the drive, though

more fundamental than representation and foreign to its lighting, isn't it, like representation, something secondary, a mere equivalent, the transcription of something that though in itself foreign to all manifestation, nonetheless constitutes the ultimate creative force of every psychical reality, including affect itself?³⁹ The drive itself, however, is merely a representative of at least some of the many excitations that never cease to assail the Psyche.⁴⁰ An understanding of Freud's thought implies that at this point we must once again take up the famous schema of the 1895 "Project," which in fact was never abandoned but on the contrary determines the ultimate conceptions now confronting us, especially those of "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes" and *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. In a way, this schema marks the ultimate alienation of existential thought since it interprets thought according to the physical model of an entropy-regulated energy system. However, since this completely hypothetical "scientific" model is merely an unconscious translation of absolute and profound phenomenological life, far from determining life, the model is merely its objective representation whose characteristics are referred back to and illuminated by life and its dazzling light.

The so-called nervous system ("organism," "living tissue")⁴¹ is essentially determined by its ability to receive two sorts of excitations: those coming from outside and those whose source is the organism itself; in other words, the "Project's" *phi* and *psi* systems. However, this ability, explained as the ability of the "neurones" to receive two sorts of excitations, is merely the inscription in the organism of a double ontological receptivity: transcendental receptivity in regard to the world (i.e., its ek-static deployment) and transcendental receptivity in regard to self (absolute, living subjectivity's self-receptivity). Therefore, "excitation" is nothing but affection, pure manifestation, according to the duplicity of the fundamental modes of its actual phenomenological accomplishment. And for that reason and that reason alone, an "outside" corresponds to the first and an "inside" to the second.⁴²

The psycho-biological traits attributed by the "Project" to the *phi* and *psi* systems (Freud's text surreptitiously slips from physical to biological to psychical and includes all the previous forms) are merely a

crudely realist, "scientific" translation of the structures that determine the possibility of experience in general. The essential point is that unlike external excitations, which one escapes through appropriate motor reaction (e.g., flight), "instinctual stimuli . . . originate from within the organism,"⁴³ so the "ego" (on pp. 119–34, the "organism" becomes the "ego" or "individual being") "is defenceless against *instinctual* stimuli."⁴⁴ The impossibility of escaping the latter results from the fact that "an instinct . . . never operates as a force giving a *momentary* impact but always as a *constant* one."⁴⁵ Maintaining constant excitation (i.e., affection), the impossibility of escape or flight, of creating a split or difference, of retreat from affection (i.e., from self), caught and imprisoned in itself—such self-affection implies nothing less than absolute subjectivity and as immanent self-affection, the essence of ipseity and finally the ego (no longer seen from outside but in its innermost, inalienable possibility). All this is said in the article on repression: "With an instinct, flight is of no avail, for *the ego cannot escape from itself*."⁴⁶

In the final analysis, Freud's "drive" does not mean a particular psychical motion but the weight and charge of actual, inescapable self-impression. The condition of never being able to be rid of or suppress self is need ("A better term for an instinctual stimulus is a 'need.' What does away with a need is 'satisfaction'").⁴⁷ The suppression of need is merely its transformation into another affective mode. The problematic of drives, since affect is merely a representative, was supposed to lead affectivity back to a more profound substratum. But in fact drives already appear to lead back to affectivity since as self-impression, they have their essence in affectivity itself. But before we attack this issue, let's move back a bit.

According to the "Project," the model that leads the entire interpretation of the Psyche and determines it as a "psychical apparatus" is a system of neurones invested with quantities of energy coming from a double source, exogenous and endogenous. Furthermore, this system tends to reduce those quantities to the state $Q = 0$: the principle of inertia. Such a tendency seems realizable in regard to exogenous excitations since the energy they elicit can be utilized by the organism

in its efforts toward flight. This is not the case for the endogenous excitations; they are not momentary but constant, and above all, *it is impossible to distance oneself from them*. Thus, according to the "Project," there are quantities of energy permanently invested in the system *psi*, a "permanently invested [cathected]" ego.⁴⁸ In other words, *affection as self-affection never stops*.

The system can never get rid of its quantities of energy because life cannot get rid of itself. This is why the inertia principle changes to one of constancy: there is an inalienable "energy," and hence the "system" can claim only to lower the level, not to eliminate it completely. The transition from the inertia principle to the principle of constancy camouflages and expresses in the mythical scientific language of 1895 the structure of absolute subjectivity: the system *psi* is an image of Psyche's original essence.

Now, returning to the original issue, is affectivity second in comparison with the quantities of energy that constitute or support the essence of the drive? Or are such quantities in turn the image of fundamental affective determinations? According to the explicit explanation, the quantities of energy and their law, namely, the principle of constancy, determine the tonalities since the "nervous system" moves toward "mastering stimuli," "reducing them to the lowest possible level,"⁴⁹ and this lowering of tension is felt as pleasure, whereas its augmentation or maintenance at a high level is felt as unpleasure. However, we don't know anything about these quantities of energy or their supposed variations, and even less about the regulation by which they determine the tonalities. In reality, we always start with tonalities, with pleasure and the movement toward it. The "pleasure principle" (the "main purpose . . . in the operation of our mental apparatus") belongs to phenomenology. Its explanation by the principle of constancy is merely an added hypothesis. Only after the fact, while inquiring into that principle's "precondition," does the text declare that "pleasure is *in some way* connected with the diminution, reduction or extinction of the amounts of stimulus prevailing in the mental apparatus."⁵⁰ The "metapsychology" proceeds in the same fashion:

When we . . . find that the activity of . . . [the] mental apparatus is subject to the pleasure principle, i.e., is automatically regulated by feelings belonging to the pleasure-unpleasure series, we can hardly reject the further hypothesis that these feelings reflect the manner in which the process of mastering stimuli takes place. . . . We will, however, carefully preserve this assumption in its present highly indefinite form.⁵¹

Similarly, it appears that repression is not directed by a flight from higher levels of excitation but by flight from unpleasure and more important, from *actual* unpleasure, unpleasure felt in the present. That is, it is posited as a process immanent to and identical with phenomenological life: "The motive and purpose of repression is nothing else than the avoidance of unpleasure."⁵² Repression poses a difficult theoretical problem because since the satisfaction of a drive is always a pleasure, it is difficult to see why it would be repressed. It can only be because of "some sort of process by which the pleasure of satisfaction is changed into unpleasure."⁵³ Hence the play of quantities and their variations, supposedly regulated by the principle of constancy, is really regulated by and entirely reabsorbed in the pleasure-unpleasure series, a dialectics of affectivity itself.

Whenever we feel a lessening of excitation in pleasure or its increase in unpleasure, the "excitation" involved is not beyond pleasure, beyond affective tonality. It is merely a word to express its phenomenological content, *not* the excitation or quantity of energy invested in the neurones, of which we know nothing. Only through a grave abuse of language is the scientific explanation integrated with experience and thus seemingly demonstrated by it, as if it were really those neuron energies that one feels directly and truly in pleasure or unpleasure.

But doesn't Freud claim the contrary? "In the series of feelings of tension we have a direct sense of the increase and decrease of amounts of stimulus."⁵⁴ Note, however, that this proposition, concentrating the equivocalness of theories incapable of circumscribing their own site, having neglected the "reduction," and thus inextricably confounding "physical" and "psychical," intervenes precisely when in "The Economic Problem of Masochism" (1924) Freud abruptly aban-

dons his endlessly repeated thesis and recognizes that pleasure really can correspond to an increase in tension and unpleasure to a decrease. The physical content, the real neuronic energy, supposedly less in pleasure and greater in pain, is therefore knocked completely out of the game, along with the whole previously erected system. What is taken into account is solely an excitation, a phenomenological tension, and Freud says that *this* excitation is present in pleasure, in *this* pleasure, which consists precisely of *this* excitation and coincides with it—just as he states that a sinking feeling is present in pain, in the pain that coincides with that feeling. Reestablished in its entirety, the text reads: “It seems that in the series of feelings of tension we have a direct sense of the increase and decrease of amounts of stimulus, and it cannot be doubted that there are pleasurable tensions and unpleasurable relaxations of tension.” In the final analysis, even for Freud, phenomenology demolishes the initial speculative schema.

The mutual interference of “scientific” and phenomenological discourses is expressed in the strange denomination of affectivity as “quantum of affect” (*Affektbetrag*). Apparently “quantity” designates the pure quality “affective” only because it aims beyond it to the neuronic system’s energy state, its invested quantities of excitation; that is, to what the affect is supposed to represent. If, however, we ignore the “Project”’s mythical hinterworld and transpose it to the phenomenological level, does this quantity still have any meaning? Remember that this is not just any quantity; it is “too much.” And when the neuronic energy cedes its place to an “affective charge,” it is affected precisely by that “too much.” It is “too heavy”; it is the affect itself as self-charged, self-supporting, and incapable of escaping itself—as life’s essence. The “discharge” of the neurones, that is, the liquidation of the quantities of energy invested in them, is in turn merely the transposition into science’s imaginary ideal of life’s essence in its insurmountable self-passivity and its attempt to escape the oppressive character of its own being. “The real task of repression,” namely, “the liquidation of charge into affect,” the “processes of discharge,” which constitute the destiny of drives as affect destinies,

expresses nothing but the “burden of existence” and its flight from that burden, that is, from itself. This situation is in turn expressed by the Freudian concept of anxiety.

There is a superficial reading of Freud that owes a good deal of its success to reducing it to a sort of empirical history that illumines the destiny of man—the destiny of the adult, in this instance, based on that of the child and even the fetus. According to this reading, anxiety especially has its source in infantile anxiety and ultimately in the birth trauma, which it reproduces and repeats indefinitely. Hence, for the child being born and later for the nursling, incapable of taking care of itself, there is a situation of distress in which a sudden influx of uncontrollable excitations is immediately translated into that situation of psychical distress: anxiety.

But if we take a step or two back from that infantile anxiety, which returns in Freud’s analyses as it does in life, we see that it does not constitute a particular anxiety, tied to specific moments of an empirical history, to childhood; instead it is the model or prototype of true anxiety, or rather its essence. Its leading characteristic is that it is not an anxiety before a real external danger, an anxiety before an object (*Realangs*), but before the drives. But the drives in turn, especially the libido, are not, let us recall, provoked by any external stimulus; they are endogenous excitations, self-excitation—life itself. That is why anxiety before the drives is not an anxiety *before* them—because then, as in the case of fear before a foreign menace, one could turn away from them, flee them.

Admittedly, anxiety is often described by Freud as a flight before the libido and is even compared to a flight before an object, so that the ego treats “this internal danger as though it were an external one.”⁵⁵ In this case, the defense measures are the formation of symptoms for which anxiety tries in some way to exchange its own existence and thus destroy itself. Therefore, anxiety is really a flight before itself, so that in the self’s relation to anxiety, there is precisely no “before” but rather the original impossibility of deploying any “before.” The flight starts with anxiety; anxiety provokes it, wants to flee from itself, and since it inhabits the being of the flight it deter-

mines, can never achieve that goal. More specifically, it is the feeling of not being able to escape oneself, where the "self" is essentially constituted by precisely that impossibility. Anxiety is the feeling of being, as life. It is the feeling of Self.

In Freudian terms, life is drive, libido; anxiety is the feeling of libido, the experience that libido has of itself, not as that particular libido but as driven into itself in its inability to break the bond that binds it to itself—insofar as the phenomenological experience of that inability is anxiety, that impression of tightness and suffocation for which the child's coming into the world provides the empirical exemplification. Man is not susceptible to anxiety because he comes into the world in the contractions of labor and the panic of asphyxiation; rather, he recognizes that panic and experiences that pain because he is susceptible to anxiety, because he is originally constituted in himself as a living being and as a Self, as Freud himself states quite literally: "The anxiety which signifies a flight of the ego from its libido is after all supposed to be derived from that libido itself. . . . A person's libido is fundamentally something of his and cannot be contrasted with him as something external."⁵⁶

Actually, it is not simple libido that provokes anxiety; more precisely, it is *unemployed libido*. Immediately following the above-quoted passage we read that neurotic anxiety is not a secondary phenomenon, a particular case of anxiety before an object:

We see . . . that in a small child something that behaves like realistic anxiety shares its essential feature—origin from unemployed libido.

Infantile anxiety . . . is closely related to the neurotic anxiety of adults. . . . it is derived from unemployed libido.

The same thing happens with [phobias] as with children's anxiety: unemployable libido is being constantly transformed into an apparently realistic anxiety and thus a tiny external danger is introduced to represent the claims of the libido.⁵⁷

What is unemployed libido? It is repressed libido. But a repressed libido is not, for all that, excluded. It does not fall out of experience. Quite the opposite, and here the theory of repression of affects we have been defending is strikingly confirmed: *repressed libido is libido*

whose self-experiencing is taken to the extreme, to the point of being insupportable, to the degree of suffering at which, no longer able to support itself, it tries to flee and escape itself. So anxiety, at the very heart of suffering and its increase, is nothing but the feeling of not being able to escape itself: "What most facilitates the development of a neurosis [and the text has just stated that this is anxiety] is an *incapacity to tolerate [or support] a considerable damming-up [or repression] of libido over any great length of time.*"⁵⁸

What is "employed" libido, libido that is expended, released, liberated, and finally expresses itself? Since unemployed or "dammed-up" libido is libido that in short is there, felt in every part of its being until it can no longer feel or support itself, and since, based on that self-suffering's essence, it is nothing but life, the accomplishment of libido, whose image is the liquidation of energies invested in the neuronic system, and its tendency toward the state $Q = 0$ is in turn nothing but the liquidation of life itself. Freudianism is the last milestone in the history that opposing the definition of man by thought, discovers life in his most profound depths. But Freudianism accounts for life only to liquidate it. The meaning of entropy in the initial speculative schema of the "Project" rises before us.

Since life, and hence Psyche's essence, is the transcription, equivalent, or representative of an energetic system tending to the abolition of the quantities that constitute it and thus to its self-suppression, it is in itself nothing but the movement of that self-destruction, the effort and aspiration toward its own death. Phenomenological life in its most profound, affective determinations betrays this same movement. Pleasure is precisely the inner experience of that self-destruction in its accomplishment. Its delight is like life's secret consent to death because death and the movement toward it are life's proper essence: "Everything living dies for *internal* reasons—becomes inorganic once again. . . . 'The aim of all life is death.'"⁵⁹

Beyond the Pleasure Principle, as is well known, introduced a new drive, more profound than that of pleasure, or at least prior to its exercise, because the pleasure principle can operate only if the energy liberated from the organism has already been bound by a compulsion

to repeat that aims at reestablishing "the inertia inherent in organic life" and finally at the inorganic state. What underlies such a compulsion is the death drive.

As "an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things,"⁶⁰ that is, to maintain excitations at the lowest possible state, the death drive, far from opposing the pleasure principle or preceding it in the genesis of reality, is identical to it. The detour by way of the compulsion to repeat and the precariousness of the theoretical means employed to introduce the death drive are actually useless if the latter is merely the reaffirmation of the presuppositions that had continually guided the doctrine, if, extending across Freud's entire opus and unveiling its true meaning, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and the "Project for a Scientific Psychology" reach out to each other.

Against death, and in order at least provisionally to maintain life so that despite everything there is something rather than nothing, Eros remains. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* continuously celebrates Eros: "Eros, the preserver of all things," "Eros, the preserver of life," "Eros, which seeks to force together and hold together the portions of living substance," "Eros . . . which holds all living things together."⁶¹ How does Eros preserve life? The only possible answer, if death consists of the progressive *decrease* and eventual liquidation of quantities of invested energy, is that Eros *increases* them. The organism, instead of tending toward the inorganic by a sort of leap and revolt against its own law, opens itself and consents to the eruption and increase of new energies, so that life is now increase and not entropy. And Eros, in which these living energies exalt, opposes itself to the complicit delight of death: Eros against pleasure!⁶²

These enormous contradictions, this incoherence in which *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* loses any conceptual linearity (for example, the nearly Platonic celebration of Eros, preceded by an obsessional repetition of the entropy principle, the hypothesis that "traces the origin of an instinct to *a need to restore an earlier state of things*"),⁶³ do not upset Freud in the least; in fact, he doesn't even perceive them. Speaking of the "renewal of life . . . brought about by the influx of fresh amounts of stimulus," he adds: "This tallies well with the hypothesis that the life process of the individual leads for internal rea-

sons to an abolition of chemical tensions, that is to say, to death, whereas union with the living substance of a different individual increases those tensions, introducing what may be described as fresh *vital differences* which must then be 'lived off.'"⁶⁴

Or, beyond these contradictions and oscillations,⁶⁵ as their ultimate possibility and truth, is it not life that holds fast and develops its essence?—life, which is the least and the most, to which at the very heart of its distress is granted the ever more powerful experience of its being, the intoxication and delight of itself! The pleasure of dying is a contradiction in terms because it is really a form of life. Freud grasped only life's obscure basis, that locus of the first anxieties where, driven into itself, it thinks foremost of fleeing from itself. He followed the path of self-liquidation to the end, recognizing only its atrocious aspect, the death drive, present since the "Project."⁶⁶ He did not see the meaning of these difficult beginnings: that pain belongs to and constitutes the inner edification of being, that *that birth is a transcendental birth*, that the insupportable is inseparable from and leads to intoxication.

In summary, the unconscious does not exist—if one puts aside the fact, in this case the a priori law of all ecstatic phenomenality, that almost everything represented is excluded from representation. Outside representation, what is represented does not, for all that, subsist in the form of "unconscious representations," those entities for which Freudianism imagined such fantastic destinies.

As for the unconscious that designates life, it cannot be reduced to the empty negation of the formal concept of phenomenality if life is the initial coming into itself of being in the form of affect, its self-increase, if in the end the quantities of "excitation," their increase and decrease, are merely the expression in energy imagery of the fundamental pathos of that life.

One of Freud's crucial intuitions, which places him squarely in the line of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, is precisely that this pathos of life determines its representation and consequently *both* repression (whose ultimate possibility we have demonstrated without recourse to the interlocking hypotheses of the metapsychology but rather by rejecting them) *and* the return of the repressed. The best texts are

those that flirt with the primacy of affectivity ("this dependence of the intellect upon emotional life"),⁶⁷ that speak of those tenacious memories of "insults and humiliations,"⁶⁸ that assert that the past does not need to be recognized in order to act, that in the return to consciousness of pathogenic memories emotion is reborn before its representative content, that a "complex" is "a group of interdependent ideational elements cathected [invested] with affect,"⁶⁹ and so on. Does not the cure itself demonstrate that the representation of one's situation, its conflicts and their history, by analysis is useless so long as the precondition of that consciousness, a modification of life, does not occur?

Freud unintentionally recognizes the fact that the unconscious does not escape every form of phenomenality but within ek-stasis is the site of the first appearance, of its self-appearing as life and affectivity, when the "Metapsychology" decisively states that "the *Ucs.* processes . . . are subject to the pleasure principle."⁷⁰ And again when at the end of its reflections on superstition, proposing a general theory of mythological, religious, and metaphysical conceptions of the world, the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* explains them as exterior projections of psychical reality and hence as its unveiling before representative consciousness, so that *that projection presupposes the obscure consciousness of what it projects*: "The obscure recognition (the endopsychic perception, as it were) of psychical factors and relations in the unconscious is mirrored . . . in the construction of a *supernatural reality*, which is destined to be changed back once more by science into the *psychology of the unconscious*."⁷¹ A note added to "obscure recognition" states, "A recognition which, of course, has nothing of the character of a [true] recognition." But that "endopsychic perception," that "obscure recognition . . . of the unconscious," its affectivity, overturns the entire dogmatic apparatus of Freudianism. They designate it as a thought of life that was incapable of equaling its project.

However, doesn't a radically phenomenological determination of "psychical reality" leave the ultimate difficulties unsolved?

Potentiality

Those "ultimate difficulties" appeared as soon as Descartes conceived the extraordinary project of defining man as the original essence of pure phenomenality and the latter as a sort of omniphenomenality, as an appearing that contains itself in every point of its being and is identical to that being. Indeed, when "soul" was first imagined as appearance's omni-exhibition in itself, reabsorbing the totality of its being in appearance, what part of that being could possibly escape that "consciousness"? What part of it could escape being "known" in that radical sense?

So the objections came from everywhere. For unless the soul is conceived as the void, as a self-transparent nothing rejecting all diversity and positivity into the opacity of beings, the problem inevitably arises of the phenomenological actuality of being's totality if being's essence is appearance, and even more so if it is the immediate self-appearing of appearance in its totality. So Descartes, who did not conceive of soul as nothing, as empty form, but as life's infinite richness and diversity, had to answer for that richness and diversity and their ability to exhibit themselves completely in self-omni-

exhibition, which he had declared to be identical to their being and thus to what they had to be always.

First there was the critique based on innate ideas, supposedly constitutive of soul's richness, its "treasure." For if the possibility of their being originates in appearance's initial self-appearing, they should all appear constantly to themselves, making our spirit a sort of blinding, transcendental Milky Way, which in fact we can hardly imagine. And the fetus in the mother's womb, as soon as soul entered it, still wouldn't possess, as people ironically said, that marvelous idea of God on which Descartes would construct his entire metaphysics. But as we have seen, all of these mental contents fell beneath such a critique, and nineteenth-century psychology, relayed by Freud, allowing only one content into the light while all the others (the memories of which we no longer think) remain plunged in a state of "latency," broke the crystalline appearance of the Cartesian soul, positing in its place actual phenomenality's anti-essence—the unconscious.

Our radical phenomenology has clarified the confusion from which these "objections" arise. The ontological delimitation of the concept *unconscious* has rigorously separated the nonphenomenality of the "world" (the finitude of its horizon) from that of life. *Unconscious*, therefore, has two wholly different meanings, depending on whether it refers to the inevitable obscurity of all mental content once it quits the "present" of intuition and self-evidence and becomes a mere virtual representation or refers to life itself, which necessarily escapes the light of ek-stasis. This double reference occurs constantly in Freud, and we have shown how the simple latency of representational contents yields to a more profound consideration, which thematizes the unconscious in its connection to life's original essence and its primal mode of immanent accomplishment: action, force, drives, Energy.

As for the unconscious said to belong to representivity based on the majority of our representation's virtuality, this actually presupposes a belief in their real existence as discrete contents juxtaposed in an unconscious created solely to contain them. Thus the unconscious is presented as the ultimate illusion of representational metaphysics:

the maintenance and persistence of the juxta-posed and the ex-posed as such; that is, of phenomenality's ecstatic essence, but in the absence of that very phenomenality, in the absence of the phenomenological actuality constituted in and by ek-stasis itself.

Descartes denounced this misunderstanding. What remains in the soul are *not* those representative contents in their ex-position and ecstatic juxta-position but "the faculty of producing them." The soul, therefore, is not a sort of "idea warehouse" in which all those mental entities, considered in their objective reality and subsisting as such, are interposed. The unconscious-receptacle of Bergson and Freud could, without harm, be abandoned to the fictional universe of mal-adroit speculation's hypotheses or, if you will, to the crude realism of mythologies.

We have also shown, however, the displacement to which Descartes constrains us. The consideration of the idea's formal as opposed to its objective reality has no crucial significance unless considered in terms other than those of creature and creator, of representational content and the power that produces it. With this thematic modification, however, the idea of power and Force comes to the fore, ready for radical elucidation. But classical thought misses this elucidation because it limits the formation of representations and thus the account of the possibility of their indefinite repetition, of their reproduction and recognition, to the power of representation, its production considered in and for itself—in short, to ecstatic consciousness. The light of ek-stasis is the only tool such a thought has at its disposal when it inevitably bumps into the question concerning the phenomenological status of the power that gives birth to all representations. Because that status is precisely the same as the objective reality of ideas, any reference to their creator, any accounting for the power that forms them, is useless.

Thus, in Descartes's commentators as well as in Descartes himself we see the repetition of exactly the same uncertainties relative to the phenomenological actuality of the soul's content when, moving away from its infinitely varied objective reality, they consider the acts that produce it: these acts are actualized only for a moment; the time of

their actualization is identical to that of their phenomenological actuality, to their brief appearance in the conscious field before they fall back, like the contents, into the night of unconsciousness.

One might argue that such acts are merely the actualization of the diverse powers and faculties of the soul; it is these faculties that remain in it as its reality. But how and in what form? If self-omnibition constitutes the essence of soul and its contents, of everything "in it," aren't these faculties "absolute phenomena," wholly present to themselves at every moment, a transcendental Milky Way of the soul's powers, now juxtaposed upon its "innate ideas"?

Obviously not. So we are forced to recognize that such faculties exist in the soul only potentially and that only their actualization, when it occurs, obeys the law of omniphénoménality in "phenomenological actuality." But what of the crucial statement that potential existence is nothing? "The objective being of an idea cannot be produced merely by potential being, which strictly speaking is nothing, but only by actual or formal being."¹

If potential existence is nothing and cannot produce the objective reality of an idea, how can it constitute the being of the faculty of which that production is merely the workings? That is why, in the same text in which he concedes the potential existence of the faculties, Descartes corrects his first statement with another, even more crucial one—soul's ability to grasp and immediately use that faculty; in other words, the original possibility and essence of every power as such:

But it must be noted that, although we are always actually aware of the acts or operations of our minds, we are not always aware of the mind's faculties or powers, except potentially. By this I mean that *when we concentrate on employing one of our faculties, then immediately, if the faculty in question resides in our mind, we become actually aware of it.*²

It might also be argued that *if the potential existence of a faculty signifies its unconsciousness*, how can the soul use or even form any idea of it? And if that idea does somehow miraculously come to mind, how can the soul recognize it as the idea of the faculty it needs and is

getting ready to use? Especially, how is that use possible, how can the soul grasp that faculty and power and unite with them in order to become one with them and what they can do to do what they do and be what they are?

Only a radical (i.e., material) phenomenology that does not simply designate appearance externally and formally but takes its concrete accomplishment into account is capable of recognizing the essential dichotomy of its actualization, the materiality and phenomenological substantiality of pure phenomenality as such and thus of definitively surmounting those uncertainties. For only such a phenomenology can grasp the ultimate significance of placing the idea's objective reality in the power that produces it since only such a phenomenology leads from phenomenality's ecstatic dimension and accompanying finitude to the original semblance in which life is life, which experiences itself in its whole being *and consists of that same self-experience*. And that is why the cogito, for those who recognize the essential split of *videre* and *videor*, after reducing the first, exhausts itself in the second and permits, or rather demands, the exhaustive phenomenological definition of "man" as living.

It is impossible, therefore, to apply the laws of *videre*, of the world's finitude, to power. Its "act" or "phenomenological actualization" is not its momentary illumination by the light of self-evidence. In fact, *in that light, power, force, and every actual form of energy never arrive. But it is precisely this impossibility of ever arriving in ek-static light that makes them possible as such, as power and force, as actual, efficacious forms of energy*. For if they expose themselves before me, even for a moment, how could I ever rejoin them? On the basis of what power could I move toward grasping them if I didn't already have that power, if I didn't coincide with it in its incoercible self-coherence as the Self that I am? The essence of all power always erects itself "this side" of the world, never by its power. There are no natural forces.

This side of the world, in the invisible, in absolute subjectivity's radical immanence, or in Freud's mythical language, in the unconscious—thus, in Freud himself, we are led from a first, superficial

definition of the unconscious to another, more significant one. The consideration of virtual representation's latency ends by merely hypostasizing them in a realist unconscious, which in turn is merely the hypostasis of their ontological structure, of the horizontal-ecstatic as such. On the other hand, with the critique of these classical theses, according to which virtuality (and unconsciousness as virtuality) is synonymous with inefficacy and weakness, with the attempt to establish the existence of the unconscious based on its power (the power to determine not only representation but behavior itself, not merely pathological behavior), with the affirmation of an "efficient unconscious," Freud stands before the abyss where all power dissimulates its essence—namely, the original impossibility of its being objected as an object. The unconscious is no longer representation's metaphysical hypostasis. In fact, the unconscious now dismisses representation. Thus, prolonging Schopenhauer and Nietzsche's radical effort, belonging like them in its historical provenance to Being's own will to remain in itself and to be Life, psychoanalysis is illuminated by their crucial intuitions and becomes intelligible in their following, at the heart of that genealogy whose difficult and painful progress I am attempting to follow.

In the end, only a mode of thought deliberately opposed to representation, to its foundation as well as its forms, the actuality of a praxis, can deliver power from ek-static lighting and save its original possibility. This is what occurs when adopting Maine de Biran's brilliant discoveries as his own, Schopenhauer locates the center of the debate in the body—not the body of representation, which traditional philosophy has exclusively and superficially devoted itself to, thus missing any possibility of grasping the essence of power, of any power whatsoever, especially that of the body.

The body is the whole of our powers. Its being can be understood only on the basis of the essence of power. What must be set aside from the very beginning is the idea of bodily actions, inevitably in the plural. For if we consider the body in the exercise of its efficacious power, there is really no question of a bodily act, which is merely the representation of power, its coming into ek-stasis where it fractures

following the lines of ex-position and juxta-position, where it becomes the plurality of acts in which it is said to actualize itself, whereas it actually *unrealizes* itself there, in the illusory multiplicity that Schopenhauer recognized as the law of mere "appearance"—since reality, which he called will, namely power's original essence, is lost in that appearance.

At Sanjūsangen dō in Kyoto, under the vast canopy of the forest, 1,001 statues of Kannon Bosatsu, the goddess of compassion, are placed side-to-side, each one different, they say, works of the finest artists. Each statue has more than 1,000 arms, of which one perceives only 21 pairs, but those 42 arms represent 1,000 since each one saves 25 worlds. Additionally, if one notes that Kannon Bodhisattva can take on 33 forms, that makes 33,033 Kannon to be seen in the 1,001 effigies at the temple. But it is always the same one because Kannon is power, not an act but the infinite and indefinite possibility of giving and saving, so that indefinite possibility, the essence of power, and *only* that possibility, always gives because it alone *can* give. The many acts of that power are merely its representation in Indian, Chinese, or Japanese imagery, and the insane, oppressive proliferation of those statues in the great vessel is merely the formulation in Asia's cumulative sensibility of something that does not lend itself to that sort of exhibition. That is why the vessel is too small and, before the mass of goddesses with innumerable hands, the spectator's uneasiness grows.

The multiplicity of acts as well as their immediate means, in this case Kannon's hands, is a problem only for a thinking that claims to hold and know everything in *its* space. Only by turning our back on it can we hope to grasp power in its indefinite capacity for reproduction; that is, in its very essence. Consider, then, one of our body's powers as a power, Kannon's principal attribute, for example—the hand. Consider it not in its ecstatic appearance, in which that indefinite capacity for prehension has its archaic figuration in the image of those tens of thousands of juxtaposed hands, but in itself, as the subjective power of prehension: it is never an act, accomplished here or there, that movement localizable in space and with a definite duration, this or that act. Rather, that act, every possible act of that

power, is possible only in that power. Their ontological reality is never anything but the reality of that power; their substance is its substance; their flesh is its flesh.

If power is described as the possibility of those acts, then that possibility must be understood in turn not as an ideal, which can never produce reality, but as the original ontological possibility that constitutes reality—in this case, the original ontological possibility of prehension that constitutes the reality of the hand and finally of the body itself as my being's fundamental "I can." This ontological possibility is called Potentiality. If in the end the existence of a primal Unconscious must be contested because of its inability to contain the accomplishment of any possible power, of anything characterized by effectivity as desire or drive, then potentiality comes into question, or more exactly, its phenomenological status needs to be clearly established.

It is easy to perceive the potentiality containing our body's powers if we consider, as is usually and correctly done, each of its powers in relation to the world to which it opens us on each occasion. For the world is never given to any determinate or individual act, to this or that act of seeing or hearing, of smelling or touching. On the contrary, only that to which I have an original possibility of access is a world, that which I can see or hear, touch or feel, as often as I want, precisely since I have that possibility, because each sense is a power and each of its actualizations is an actualization of that power and not an act coming from who knows where whose possibility would always remain mysterious if it weren't first given to me as the very possibility that I am.

Therefore, things are never present to my body as necessarily unique experiences, as what will never be seen twice, but on the contrary, as what can be originally seen, as indefinitely evocable under condition of a certain movement, because the original capacity of accomplishing that movement (of eye or hand) constitutes the very being of my body. When, on the contrary, we seem to see a countryside or face that we will never see again, this new significance, which gives the world of human intersubjectivity and the world in general

its tragic nature (since we are never more than passing tourists in it) and the provisional and fugitive nature of all experience—this is possible only because of our permanent ability to access the world, an ability constitutive of our being. Even the idea of death, which represents the complete disappearance of all my body's powers, is merely a negative determination of the general significance of my world-experience as my body, as an experience of power.

At this point, however, power's phenomenological status, Potentiality, can no longer be understood as, or based on, the Ek-stasis of a world. Our body is the whole of our power over the world; through all its senses it weaves the strands binding us to that world; it has eyes, ears, feet, and hands. But the original hyperpower through which we grasp each of those powers in order to harness them, through which we can, as Descartes observed, dispose of and use them whenever we want—that hyperpower contains none of those powers, nor does it accomplish itself through their intervention. It has no need of them, but they need it.

There is an original body, an Archi-Body, in which that hyperpower resides and deploys its essence as identical to it. The body has eyes, ears, and hands, but the Archi-Body does not. Yet only through it are eyes and hand, the original possibility of seeing or taking, given to us as the very thing we are, as our body. Therefore, we are actually always slightly more than what we are, more than our body. Material phenomenology is the radical theory of that "more," which Nietzsche imagined as will to power, Life's hyperpower. Will to power is the Archi-Body in which our body first comes into itself as everything living and as life itself.

Superficial thoughts are thoughts of mediation. To know what we are, they always take a detour: either our true being is mediately constituted, or our knowledge of it is mediate. To catch the secret of our being, psychoanalysis was in complete agreement: drives manifest themselves only in their "acts," in the exploded whole of the subject's unperceived behavior—its representations, its affects—and all these indications are sacrificed to a hermeneutic reading. We must therefore hack through a forest of symbols to find the great paths

along which drives have tried to discharge themselves and by which life has tried to be rid of itself. To regasp that being, exploded and dispersed across the ek-stasis of time, we must reconstruct it through scattered fragments as the only law that makes sense of them, but first we must gather those fragments, proposing an exact recollection in memory, a difficult task if each memory hides another, if it is necessary to blaze a trail through the labyrinth of those screens.

But the possibility of remembering in general is the prerequisite of that analysis, not only of the method here proposed as instrument of knowledge but of the very reality to be known, of our being as exposed and exploded. But the possibility of remembering is Potentiality as such; that is, our own original being, which refutes everything we have just said of it.

Thus every thinking that confines Being to the gathering of memory is prey to contradiction. Memory joins with the juxtaposed and the dispersed through a sort of preestablished harmony. It is an "I think" that accompanies all our representations, that drags them one after the other from the virtuality that is nothing, the unconscious, to confer being on them in phenomenological actuality. The whole problem is the very possibility of memory, the power on which it is ultimately based.

Let us consider one last time our hand as the radically subjective power of prehension. Since it is always this power that grasps and not a discrete act separate from all the others, so that the thing it grasps, the solid it seizes, whose edges it traces, is originally accessible; then its knowledge of that solid, exhausted in that movement of prehension, is also its recognition, the principle of recognition of all possible objects and thus our primal memory of the world. And that is because this movement of grasping or tracing is always the same, the accomplishment of a single, unique power that always knows what it is doing and recognizes it just as it knows itself, just as it originally comes into itself in the hyperpower of its immanence.

Power's essence is therefore not the unconscious but the first appearance, life's coming into itself. Memory's principle is not representation, but the *Archi-Body* in which the hyperpower is actual and

to which representative memory (since it is first a power) also belongs. To confide to memory the reassembly of our being, of all the morsels of ourselves scattered throughout the absurd exteriority of ek-stasis, of all those so-called traumatic events that mark the course of our existence, to restitch infinitely the infinitely broken thread of all those little stories, is to forget that the reassembly is already accomplished. It is the original inner reassembly in which the essence of all power and memory itself reside, the *Archi-Revelation* of the *Archi-Body*, the eternal self-embrace of being and its pathos and before its illusory dispersion in the unreal exteriority of ek-stasis, the very essence of our being.

Reference Matter

Notes

The texts by Michel Henry reunited in this work were originally presented, at the invitation of the Japanese government, as seminars at the University of Osaka during October, November, and December of 1983, and as lectures at the Universities of Osaka, Tokyo, and Kyoto. Complete authors' names, titles, and publication data for works cited in short form in the Notes is given in the Bibliography, pp. 351–53.

Roustang: A Philosophy for Psychoanalysis?

This essay, which originally appeared in French in *Critique* 463 (Dec. 1985), was first published in Terry Thomas's English translation in the *Stanford Literature Review* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1989): 171–90; it is reprinted here with the permission of Stanford Literature Review. The following notes are also from Thomas's translation. Excerpts translated from the *Généalogie de la psychanalyse* have been altered to conform to the translation by Douglas Brick.

1. This thesis was already present in Michel Henry's first philosophical work: "There exist two specific and fundamental modes in conformity with which the manifestation of what is takes place and is manifested. In the first of these modes, Being manifests itself to the outside, it makes itself unreal in the world, it is its light and the pure milieu of visibility wherein all things are visible, where a being manifests itself. In the light wherein a being manifests itself it also hides itself, it is what is born and what dies, nevertheless in such a way that its destiny, that of being born and dying, is not its own, but finds its reason in the finitude of the place wherein it

appears, in light itself and in its decline. This is why knowledge which moves in this light and is enlightened by it is not the form of an accomplishment of a pure letting appear, but its very manifestation refers to that which does not manifest itself. In the second of these modes, in feeling, Being arises and reveals itself in itself, integrates itself with self and experiences itself, in suffering and in the enjoyment of self, in the profusion of its interior and living Being. The knowing of a knowledge from which that which it knows hides its reality and which is itself, as knowing, only the non-knowing from which it comes and to which it returns, the simple bursting forth which shines for an instant and glides over things, this is but little. To reveal oneself in such a way, that in this revelation, it is the absolute itself which reveals itself to itself in its absoluteness, in such a way that its Being blazes up and becomes entirely for itself and becomes life, to live, this is very much" (Henry, *Essence of Manifestation*, 684).

2. With regard to the elementary distinction between the dream as purely imaginary and the dream as text, Michel Henry decries the denaturation of psychoanalysis by linguistics and concludes: "In all seriousness, people can now say that the unconscious is structured like a language" (p. 292). Just for a laugh, however: "The Unconscious Is Deconstructed like an Affect." (On this subject, see Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy.)

3. Freud, "The Unconscious," *SE* 14, 177.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Laplanche and Pontalis, 13.

6. Laplanche and Pontalis, 214.

7. Michel Henry is not the only philosopher to hold such a conviction. In a different philosophical sphere, see Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, 191: "Veritable qualification of the unconscious, it [affect] is also that which accedes directly to consciousness, without passing through the preconscious—in other words, it eludes the 'descriptive unconscious' and forms the essence of the 'dynamic unconscious.' However, it cannot properly be termed 'unconscious' nor 'repressed.' The affect is the unconscious *as* consciousness." And Borch-Jacobsen, 98: "The unconscious . . . is of the nature of an affect. . . . If the unconscious so constantly passes beyond representation, if it passes only into affect, it is (it *must* be) because it is nothing representable, nothing that has been present."

8. Freud, "The Unconscious," *SE* 14, 177.

9. *Ibid.*

10. See Descombes.

11. Laplanche and Pontalis, 13.

12. Freud, *An Autobiographical Study*, *SE* 20, 42.

13. Freud, *The Question of Lay Analysis*, *SE* 20, 225.

14. On the role of "anticipatory representations" (or "ideas," as Strachey translates) in the cure, see Roustang, chap. 4.

15. Freud, *The Question of Lay Analysis*, *SE* 20, 223.

16. *Ibid.*, 225.

17. Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, *SE* 22, 55.

18. Freud, *An Autobiographical Study*, *SE* 20, 42.

19. Freud, "Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psychoanalysis," *SE* 12, 115–16.

A Belated Heir

1. Throughout this work, *l'être* (the nominal use of the infinitive *to be*) will be translated as "being" and *étant* (the present participle of *être*) as "beings"—or as "being" when its modifiers ("a," "every possible," etc.) clearly differentiate it from the former.—Trans.

2. See Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, 21: "This universal depriving of acceptance, this 'inhibiting' or 'putting out of play' . . . or as it is also called, this 'phenomenological epoché' and 'parenthesizing' of the Objective world."—Trans.

3. See Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *BW* 228–29.—Trans.

4. Freud, "An Outline of Psychoanalysis," in *SE* 23, 159.

5. On this question, see Chapter 9.

6. Throughout this book, the verb *poser* (to place) is worked over rather thoroughly, especially in the phrase *poser devant* (to place before). Because of its numerous resonances with words like *impose*, *suppose*, *presuppose*, *oppose*, *propose*, *juxtapose*, etc., it will generally be translated as "pose," but it should be remembered that this does not necessarily imply any sort of theatrical "posing."—Trans.

7. *Arrière-monde* is an allusion to Nietzsche's *Hinterwelt*, the "afterworld" of the "otherworldly" thinkers.—Trans.

8. This "crucial step" characterizes Henry's philosophy, which might be summed up as "*appearance* (i.e., life's eternal coming into it-Self) *precedes essence*"; see below, p. 239: "Being *is* not; it is a coming, life's eternal coming into itself."—Trans.

Chapter 1

1. "The Passions of the Soul," *Writings* 1, 328. For Schelling's reproach, see *The Ages of the World*.

2. Henry uses *effectivité* (which I will usually translate as "actuality") and all its cognates primarily for their resonance with *affectivité* (affectivity), a word that will take on considerable importance in what follows.

3. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 46.

4. Descartes, "Principles of Philosophy," 1, 8, in 9, 28; my emphasis (cf. *Writings* 1, 195, translated from the Latin: "We see very clearly that neither extension nor shape nor local motion, nor anything of this kind which is attributable to a body, belongs to our nature, *but that thought alone belongs to it*" [my emphasis]—Trans.).

5. On the persistence within Cartesianism of elements borrowed from the tradi-

tion, especially Scholasticism, see the works of his principal commentators: Etienne Gilson, Jean Laporte, Henri Gouhier, Martial Guerolt, and Ferdinand Alquié, and those of Jean-Luc Marion.

6. The term *eidetic* comes from Husserl's phenomenology. Its cognate *eidos* is synonymous with the German word *Wesen* (essence) and similar to the Platonic-Kantian *idea*. See Husserl, *Ideas*, 42, and *Cartesian Meditations*, 70.—Trans.

7. *Writings* 1, 339: "For the body is a unity which is in a sense indivisible because of the arrangement of its organs, these being so related to one another that the removal of any one of them renders the whole body defective."

8. *Videre* is the infinitive of the Latin verb meaning "to see." *Videor* is the first-person passive form of the same verb, usually translated as "I am seen" or "I seem."—Trans.

9. *Writings* 2, 19 (the original Latin may be found in AT 7, 29).

10. This and much (or even all) of what follows is an allusion to and critique of the philosophy of Martin Heidegger and behind or beyond him, all of Western philosophy. In the preface to his massive *Essence of Manifestation* (xi), Henry says, "This book was born of a refusal, the refusal of the very philosophy from which it has sprung." In particular, the frequent references to light and (mediate) vision are a critique of what Rodolphe Gasché calls "photology": the fact that, as Heidegger notes, Western philosophy has always thought of "being" in terms of vision. The term *ob-jection* refers (via its Latin roots, *thrown before* or *thrown in front of*) to Heidegger's definition of *Dasein* (commonly understood as the form of existence or "being" characteristic of man; literally, *being-there*, where *there* is opposed to the *here* of "beings" who are not compelled to go searching "there," elsewhere, for their particular being) as *geworfen* (thrown) into the world. This is coupled with a critique of the conception of thought as re-presentation (Heidegger's *Vor-stellung*, which in its unhyphenated form is usually translated as "idea" or "representation," but whose etymological roots—a *standing* or *placing before* or *in front of*—are emphasized by Heidegger). Similarly, *ek-stasis* (literally, *standing or placing outside*) is another term used by Heidegger to characterize the unique (non)being of *Dasein*.—Trans.

11. *Du Malin*: the reference is to Descartes's hypothetical "malicious demon of the utmost power and cunning [who] has employed all his energies in order to deceive me" (*Writings* 2, 15). It is this *malin génie* (or in alternate scenarios, the dream) that allows Descartes to carry out his *epoché*, the metaphysical and hyperbolic doubt.—Trans.

12. Here the allusion is to Husserl's "intentionality," in which all consciousness is "consciousness of . . ."; there is no such thing as consciousness separate from its object, says Husserl, and yet we can still make the imaginary division between consciousness (*cogito*) and its object (*cogitatum*). Henry's effort is to demonstrate the possible (and indeed necessary) existence of a preintentional consciousness, which he calls alternately "appearance," "affectivity," "life," etc.—Trans.

13. Descartes, Alquié ed., 2, 422 n. 2.

14. AT 11, 23 (cf. *Writings* 2, 19 [translated from the Latin]: "Yet I certainly *seem* to see, to hear, and to be warmed. This cannot be false; what is called 'sensing' (*sentire*) is strictly just this, and in this restricted sense of the term it is simply thinking" [translation of *sentire* (having a sensory perception) altered to "sensing"]—Trans.).

15. AT 1, 413. The first Cartesians understood sensing's immanence in thought, which gives it its phenomenological actuality, allowing it to well up as an irreducible and immediate primal appearance. Inspired by the Replies to the sixth set of Objections, Dilly, in his treatise *De l'âme des bêtes*, affirms that "when I see, my seeing makes itself felt, without there being need of anything else" (116–17). Supporting himself this time on the *De libro arbitrio* of Saint Augustine, Régis declares that "the soul does not see anything by the senses without perceiving that it sees it," and thus "the soul knows its sensations by themselves" (*Système de philosophie* 1, 150), a proposition that is extended to thought in general and to all thoughts, which are "known by themselves." On this, cf. Lewis, 107–23.

16. Cf. the letter to Mersenne, July 1641, AT 3, 394.

17. AT 9, 28 (cf. *Writings* 1, 195, translated from the Latin: "By the term 'thought,' I understand everything which we are aware of as happening within us, in so far as we have awareness of it"—Trans.).

18. AT 7, 422 (cf. *Writings* 2, 285: "that internal awareness which always precedes reflective knowledge"; I include my translation from the French because Henry makes several references to Descartes's assertion that "thought's original self-sensing" is a "type of knowledge [or intellection]"—Trans.).

19. "I thought that gravity carried bodies towards the centre of the earth as if it had some knowledge of the centre within itself. For this surely could not happen without knowledge, and there can be no knowledge except in a mind" (sixth set of Replies, *Writings* 2, 298). Here again we see that the Cartesian "mechanism" primarily signifies the thought of beings in its radical incompatibility with the work of appearance.

20. *Writings* 2, 18; "*sum igitur praecise tantum res cogitans, id est mens, sive animus, sive intellectus, sive ratio, voces mihi prius significationis ignotae*" (AT 7, 27).

21. *Writings* 2, 19; "*Sed quid igitur sum? Res cogitans, quid est hoc? nempe dubitans, intelligens, affirmans, negans, volens, nolens, imaginans quoque et sentiens*" (AT 7, 28).

22. This reference is not only constant at the end of the second Meditation but is reaffirmed in the fifth set of Replies: "The clear inference from this is that we know more attributes in the case of our mind than we do in the case of anything else. For no matter how many attributes we recognize in any given thing, we can always list a corresponding number of attributes in the mind which it has in virtue of knowing the attributes of the thing; and hence the nature of the mind is the one we know best of all" (*Writings* 2, 249). Cf. also *Principles of Philosophy*, *Writings* 1, 196.

23. Fifth set of Replies, *Writings* 2, 171.

24. This thesis is particularly prominent in Guerolt's monumental work.

25. My translation of the French version (AT 9, 62); cf. *Writings* 2, 54 (translated from the Latin): “I find in myself faculties for certain special modes of thinking, namely imagination and sensory perception. Now I can clearly and distinctly understand myself as a whole without these faculties; but I cannot, conversely, understand these faculties without me, that is, without an intellectual substance to inhere in.” The French departs rather radically from this text, and Henry uses these departures to his advantage in the argument he is building here, not necessarily against Descartes himself but against a certain Cartesianism (in this case, that of the duc de Luynes, Descartes’s translator).—Trans.

26. “*Lettre à Gibieuf*,” 19 January 1642 (AT 3, 479).

Chapter 2

1. What Descartes, following Aristotelian and Scholastic practice, calls the idea’s *material reality* is the reality of soul itself, its own phenomenality, identical to its being. The idea’s *formal reality* is confounded with its material reality, similarly designating the phenomenological reality of the soul, or “thought.” It differs, however, by limiting the latter to “thought of . . .” Material reality, on the other hand, signifies thought, or soul, as indeterminate. Thus the formal reality of the idea is a limited mode of soul. For this reason, the two are ontologically compatible; i.e. formal reality’s substantiality and materiality are soul’s own phenomenological substantiality and materiality. Cf., from the third Meditation: “The nature of an idea is such that of itself it requires no formal reality except what it derives from my thought, of which it is a mode” (*Writings* 2, 28). The following argument is based on this sense of the idea’s formal reality.

2. AT 9, 30 (cf. *Writings* 2, 27: “Whatever is revealed to me by the natural light—for example that from the fact that I am doubting it follows that I exist, and so on—cannot in any way be open to doubt”—Trans.).

3. *Principles of Philosophy* 1, 68, in *Writings* 1, 217.

4. *Principles* 1, 46, AT 9B, 44 (cf. *Writings* 1, 208: “the sensation of pain”—Trans.).

5. Sixth set of Replies, *Writings* 2, 298; my emphasis.

6. Second set of Replies, *Writings* 2, 113.

7. Third set of Objections with Replies, *Writings* 2, 127.

8. *Principles* 1, 67, in *Writings* 1, 216–17 (note that the English translators consistently translate the Latin *mens* as “mind,” whereas the original French translation is *âme* [soul, mind, spirit]—Trans.).

9. Third Meditation, *Writings* 2, 25.

10. Translated from Henry’s version of the French, which differs not only from the English translation of the Latin (“*The freedom of the will is self-evident. . . . The freedom which we experienced within us was . . . so great as to enable us to abstain from believing*”) but even from the French: Henry interposes a negative (“*nous ne pouvions nous empêcher*”) where none exists in the original.—Trans.

11. *Writings* 1, 207–8; translation modified (adding the material in brackets to conform to the French).—Trans.

12. AT 9B, 44 (cf. *Writings* 1, 208: “For people commonly confuse this [clear] perception [of a pain] with an obscure judgment they make concerning the nature of something they think exists in the painful spot and which they suppose to resemble the sensation of pain; but in fact it is the sensation alone which they perceive clearly”—Trans.).

13. *Writings* 2, 77; AT 7, 107.

14. “The Unconscious,” *SE* 14, 167.

15. “Comments on a Certain Broadsheet” *Writings* 1, 309.

16. Third set of Replies, *Writings* 2, 132 (translation modified [adding the material in brackets to conform to the French]—Trans.).

17. Second Meditation, *Writings* 2, 18.

18. Sixth set of Replies, AT 7, 427 (cf. *Writings* 2, 288: “his own thought, of which he cannot fail to be aware”—Trans.).

19. Leibniz, *New Essays*, 166.

20. *Ibid.*, 170 (translation modified).

21. There is no limit to that union, according to Leibniz, 117.

22. *Ibid.*, 115.

23. *Ibid.*, 113 (translation modified).

24. *Ibid.*, 166.

25. *Ibid.*, 118–19; my emphasis (translation modified).

26. Malebranche, *The Search After Truth*, 237.

27. *Ibid.*, 218.

28. *Ibid.*, 238.

29. Malebranche, *Oeuvres* 10, 103; my emphasis.

30. *Ibid.* 10, 102.

31. “If you had the idea of your soul, you would no longer be able to think of anything else” (*ibid.* 10, 104).

Chapter 3

1. One French translation of Heidegger’s *vorstellen* (to re-present) is “*représenter*.” As a translation of Descartes’s *cogito*, it becomes “*je me représente*” (literally “I represent to myself,” usually meaning I think or imagine). But the pronoun *me* is ambiguous and can be taken either as direct or indirect object; i.e., either as *I represent to myself* or *I represent myself*. For simplicity’s sake, I will usually translate it as “I represent.”—Trans.

2. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 103 (all references are to vol. 4 unless otherwise noted; occasional modifications to conform with the French translation will also be noted—Trans.).

3. *Nietzsche*, 106 (I have changed Capuzzi’s English translation of *sichergestellt*

[secured] to “posed-in-surety” to conform with the French and to make the connection with *vorgestellt* [re-presented] or “posed before”—Trans.).

4. *Il y a* (there is) is the standard French translation of Heidegger’s *es gibt*, although there are important differences, notably the emphasis in the German on “giving.”—Trans.

5. *Writings* 2, 19 (I translate Henry’s own translation of the Latin: “*Nam quod ego sim qui dubitem, qui intelligam, qui velim tam manifestum est, ut nihil occurrat per quod evidentius explicetur*”—Trans.).

6. “Ego” (nonitalicized) generally translates the French *moi* and the Latin word *ego*.—Trans.

7. The usual translation of Heidegger’s *Gegen-stand* as “ob-ject” is meant to emphasize the root meaning of *object*, which comes from the Latin *objectum*, from *ob* (against) and *jacere* (to throw).—Trans.

8. In this chapter, “in-front of” always translates *par-devers*.—Trans.

9. Henry consistently translates the German *zustellen* as “dis-poser,” whereas the English translation usually has “to present.”—Trans.

10. *Writings* 1, 217; cf. pp. 43–44.

11. *The End of Philosophy*, 29.

12. *Ibid.*, 25 (Henry notes that he has changed the word in brackets from *man* to *representation*, “for the intelligibility of the problematic”; I have changed the pronoun *him* to *it* to make the English correspond with Henry’s change—Trans.).

13. “Letter on Humanism,” *BW*, 210.

14. There is a slight ambiguity, impossible to reproduce in English, in the French phrase *quelque chose me regarde*; it can mean “something is gazing at me” or “something is my concern” (with the implication that it’s none of your business). Hence “the eye through which being gazes at me” may also mean “the eye through which being is my concern.”—Trans.

15. Quoted in *BW*, 216.

16. Spinoza is responsible for making this pair of terms famous; *natura naturans* is active, creative nature; *natura naturata*, passive or receptive nature.—Trans.

17. *BW*, 229; the German text is “*Das ‘In-der-Welt-sein’ nennt das Wesen der Ek-sistenz im Hinblick auf die gelichtete Dimension, aus der das ‘Ek’ der Ek-sistenz west.*”

18. Cf. *Identity and Difference*, 36.

19. *Der Satz vom Grund*, 140; I have rendered Heidegger’s *Gegenüber* as “opposite” since its prefix is related to that of *object* (*Gegenstand*) and since Heidegger uses *Gegenüber* as a translation of the Greek *antikeimenon* (what is posed [or poses itself] against).—Trans.

20. *Der Satz vom Grund*, 140.

Chapter 4

1. Throughout this chapter, in keeping with Kant’s phrase “condition of possibility,” Henry’s *condition* will generally be translated as “condition,” but it should

be remembered that this “condition” leans toward “precondition” (as it is translated elsewhere).—Trans.

2. This translation uses the standard page references to Kant (from the *Akademie* edition), usually indicated in the margins of English translations. A refers to the first edition, and B to the second.—Trans.

3. Translation altered; the German is “*Die Wirklichkeit . . . fordert Wahrnehmung, mithin Empfindung, deren man sich bewußt ist.*”—Trans.

4. As Descartes profoundly perceived; cf. Chapter 2, pp. 43–44.

5. Erdmann, 126; cf. also Kant, B 225: “Time cannot by itself be perceived.”

6. In this chapter, *moi* will generally be translated as “self” or “I,” but it should be remembered that *moi* is also the French translation of Freud’s *das Ich*, (the ego).—Trans.

7. That is why Kant refuses to apply “the concept of substance, *that is, of a self-subsistent subject*, to the self as a thinking being” (B 413; my emphasis). (In this paragraph it is crucial to understand that receptivity does not necessarily imply ecstatic distancing; indeed, one of Henry’s most important theses is that original self-affection is passive-receptive at the same time that it is originary, creative, *naturans*, etc.—Trans.)

8. Kant’s great French commentators, especially Jean Nabert in his admirable article “L’expérience interne chez Kant” and Pierre Lachière-Rey in his monumental *L’idéalisme kantien*, have shown that Kant himself suspected that inner sense’s capacity to receive passively the impressions provoked by spirit is even more important in the spirit’s self-affection than affection by the transcendental subject. In fact, in Kantianism (especially in the *Übergang*) there is a problematic that gives precedence to the question of spirit’s being-affected. It is the theory of self-positing, in which spirit, in order to affect itself, i.e., *to be affected* by its own activity, first poses itself as passive to garner in this self-posed passive self the impressions arising from its own action. Lachière-Rey writes: “One must grant that the self is first present to itself as a determinable object, not merely as determining subject and formal activity; the self makes itself into an object; it poses itself as originally passive: first, in regard to itself, and then, in regard to other things, which, in the *Übergang*, also appear to be posed by it, so that it ends up being envisioned as impressing itself internally and externally. This self-positing of the self as the point of application of the *Setzung* and as a determinable object subsists throughout all the transformations that transcendental consciousness can bring to the organization of the phenomena of inner sense. That is why they are really always phenomena of inner sense. . . . The position of the self necessarily precedes the position in, or relative to, self.” (174–75) But because the *Setzung* remains ecstatic, because “the self makes itself into an object,” the self-posed self is merely a transcendent content; it is incapable of receiving *in itself* the impression provoked in itself: inserted in it, this impression is still merely referred to an ideal term. In reality, the theory of self-positing unwillingly repeats, between determining and determined self, the situation that existed in the *Critique* between

transcendental self and inner sense. This is because, despite Lachière-Rey's express declaration, the interpretation of the self's passivity remains controlled by the pre-occupations of a philosophy essentially oriented toward object-knowledge. This can be observed in Lachière-Rey's interpretation of the *Übergang* when he declares that in this work, the self replaces the Universe or the object in general as the correlative of spiritual activity and that it therefore becomes "the imperative of knowledge" (166). A self-posed self, whose ipseity is merely ideal is incapable of being affected or more important, of being a real self; only a radically immanent subjectivity can do that.

9. "Sensation, which as such belongs to sensibility" (B 422–23).

10. "The proposition, 'I think', insofar as it amounts to the assertion, '*I exist thinking*', is no mere logical function, but determines the subject (which is then at the same time object) in respect of existence, and cannot take place without inner sense, the intuition of which presents the object not as thing in itself but merely as appearance" (B 429).

11. A 356; A 341, B 399–400; A 354; A 398–99; B 158.

12. "We cannot even say that that [the representation, 'I'] is a concept, but only that it is a bare consciousness which accompanies all concepts" (A 346, B 404). Again: "This 'I' is, however, as little an intuition as it is a concept of any object" (A 382).

13. A 398; B 407; B 407; B 408.

14. "For it must be observed, that when I have called the proposition, 'I think', an empirical proposition, I do not mean to say thereby, that the 'I' in this proposition is an empirical representation. On the contrary, it is purely intellectual, because belonging to thought in general" (B 423).

15. "The formal proposition of apperception, 'I think' . . . is not itself an experience, but the form of apperception which belongs to and precedes every experience" (A 354).

16. A 355; my emphasis. This is why the simplicity of the representation does not signify a knowledge of simplicity but the absence of such knowledge; i.e., the emptiness of the representation of a something in general.

17. A 405 (I have translated from the French, which is closer to the German "*er . . . in aller Absicht einzeln ist*" than Smith's "it is . . . in all respects unitary"—Trans.). When Kant, on the contrary, declares that the self is not the representation of a particular object (see p. 113), his affirmation is positioned on a different level. Consciousness is then considered as the transcendental power of consciousness in general, a power that is not yet specified in an object-concept (which requires an intuition). At that moment the problem of the being of "I think" is not yet posed inside the theory of experience in general, which entails the intervention of the concept of intuition, nor is it posed in the form it takes when that first path has failed, as the problem of the purely intellectual representation "I think."

Chapter 5

1. *The World as Will and Representation* 1, 3 (throughout Chapters 5 and 6, references to this work will be given parenthetically in the text—Trans.).

2. Cf. 1, 276, where the Ideas are said to be "a complete objectivity of the will."

3. Husserl, *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*, §31, pp. 90–91.

4. "A ground can be given only of phenomena . . . never of the will itself, or of the Idea in which it adequately objectifies itself" (1, 163).

5. Heidegger, *The End of Philosophy*, 31.

6. Ibid., 32.

7. Ibid. (In all citations from this work, the translation of *Wirken* and its cognates has been changed from "effecting" to "actualizing" for consistency and to bring out the German word's relation with *wirklich* [actual] and the Latin *actualitas*.—Trans.)

8. *End of Philosophy*, 34–35.

9. Ibid., 36.

10. Ibid., 37; translation modified.

11. Quoted and translated in *End of Philosophy*, 37.

12. Ibid.

13. Quoted and translated in *End of Philosophy*, 38.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.; translation modified.

16. Heidegger distinguishes between *subjectivity* (from the Latin *subjectum*, a translation of the Greek *hypokeimenon* [literally (thing) lying under, i.e., foundation]) and *subjectivity*, with its modern self or ego-related connotation.—Trans.

17. *End of Philosophy*, 38.

18. Ibid.

Chapter 6

1. For "in its objectivity (*in seiner Objektivität*)," the French translation has "*dans sa manifestation*" (in its manifestation).—Trans.

2. "Right" (*bien*), "wrong" (*mal*), "good" (*bon*), and "evil" (*méchant*); cf. 1, 360–61; Schopenhauer distinguishes between *bad* (*schlecht*) and *evil* (*übel*), more general terms, and *böse* (compared with the French *méchant*), applicable only to intelligent beings. Neither Schopenhauer (or his English translator) nor Henry seem to make any consistent distinction between these terms.—Trans.

3. For clarity of exposition, we have distinguished between an ontic and an ontological conception of life; we see that in reality the first secretly proceeds from the second, or more exactly from Schopenhauer's inability to pursue its adequate elaboration.

4. *Pro-duire* (to pro-duce) is the French translation (via the Latin *ducere* [to lead,

bring, draw]) of Heidegger's *vor-bringen*, usually translated in English as "to bring before," e.g., in the passage below, "bringing itself before itself" for *Vor-sich-selbst-bringen*.—Trans.

5. Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, 10.
6. Heidegger, *The Essence of Reasons*, 89.
7. "A Difficulty in the Path of Psycho-Analysis," *SE* 17, 143–44.
8. Cf. "Satisfaction is therefore only a pain removed, not a positive happiness brought" (1, 375).
9. The same affirmation is made at 1, 312, 196.
10. Paul-Laurent Assoun justly notes the importance of these texts (see Assoun, 185–87). After recognizing the historical origin of the concept of repression, philosophy nonetheless owes it to itself to exhibit its inner possibility.
11. The terms in parentheses are those commonly used by Strachey in the *Standard Edition* of Freud's works. Most modern translations of Freud are replacing *cathexis* with *investment*, and *affect* is such an important term in Henry that it seems preferable to employ it consistently.—Trans.
12. Both "reluctantly" (*ungern*) and "resistance" (*Widerstreben*) are translated in the French as "*répugnance*."—Trans.
13. Cf. Hartmann, 1, 249.
14. That myth is also linked with Schopenhauer's theory of history in which under the appearance of difference, the Same continually reproduces itself.
15. "That mandate of the will, objectifying itself in the species, exhibits itself in the lover's consciousness under the mask of the anticipation of an infinite bliss which he is to find in the union with this female individual" (2, 554).
16. "For this reason the ancients represented love as blind" (2, 555).
17. Elsewhere (1, 375) Schopenhauer says that "the joys certainly lie to the desire" by deluding it into thinking that they are "a positive good."

Chapter 7

1. *Beyond Good and Evil*, §36.
2. *Birth of Tragedy*, §17.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, §7.
5. *Ibid.*
6. "Attempt at a Self-Criticism," in *Birth of Tragedy*, §1.
7. "On Self-Overcoming," *Zarathustra*, 227; my emphasis, translation modified.
8. *Beyond Good and Evil*, §295 (translation modified—Trans.).
9. *Ibid.*, §56; translation modified.
10. *Genealogy of Morals*, bk. 2, §1.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, bk. 1, §13.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Beyond*, §265.
17. *Genealogy*, bk. 2, §17.
18. *Beyond*, §191; translation modified.

19. *Genealogy*, bk. 3, §28.
20. *Beyond*, §265; my emphasis.
21. *Gay Science*, preface, §2.
22. *Genealogy*, bk. 2, §24; my emphasis.
23. *Will to Power*, §685.
24. *Beyond*, §257.
25. As the rest of the analysis shows, making aristocracy the source of values; that is, the determining principle of everything that it is not; cf. pp. 246–47.
26. *Genealogy*, bk. 2, §22.
27. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, 14.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*; my emphasis.
30. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §15.
31. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §13.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §12.
34. *Beyond*, §§186, 187.
35. *Genealogy*, bk. 1, §7.
36. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §18.
37. *Birth*, §22.
38. *Ibid.*, §6.
39. *Ibid.*, §22.
40. *Beyond*, §268.
41. *Genealogy*, bk. 2, §11.
42. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §7.
43. *Beyond*, §46.
44. *Ibid.*, §225.
45. *Birth*, §9.
46. *Beyond*, §44.
47. *Ibid.*, §202.
48. *Birth*, §25.
49. *Ibid.*, §20.
50. A connection that was originally grasped in the apodictic mode by *The Essence of Manifestation*, §70.
51. *Birth*, §2; my emphasis.
52. *Genealogy*, bk. 2, §§8, 4.
53. *Ibid.*, bk. 2, §21.
54. *Beyond*, §44.
55. *Genealogy*, bk. 3, §9.
56. *Ibid.*, bk. 2, §9.
57. *Ibid.*, bk. 2, §6.
58. *Ibid.*
59. Note: one must always carefully separate what Nietzsche says about Christianity, reduced to Buddhism, as already viewed by Schopenhauer, and real Christianity, which in the Gospels says the contrary.
60. *Genealogy*, bk. 2 §7.
61. *Ibid.*; this last proposition in itself would, if necessary, confirm our interpretation of Nietzsche's "animality" and "sickness."
62. *Beyond*, §229; in my work on Marx, I spent a great deal of time demonstrating that beneath the appearance of a social, economic, and political analysis, the concepts of the proletariat and revolution in the young Marx, and especially the "dialectic" with its scientific or philosophical pretensions, merely express in a blind way the inner play of fundamental tonalities made possible by the very structure of being—in short, what is here called "the historicity of the absolute."
63. *Beyond*, §229.
64. *Ibid.*, §225.
65. *Birth*, §9.
66. *Ibid.*, §4.
67. *Ibid.*, §4.

Chapter 8

1. *Beyond Good and Evil*, §34.
2. *Genealogy of Morals*, bk. 1, §1.
3. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §19.
4. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §24.
5. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §23.
6. *Gay Science*, §344.
7. *Genealogy*, preface, §1.
8. See p. 223.
9. *Gay Science*, §334.
10. *Ibid.*, §300.
11. *Ibid.*, §205.
12. *Ibid.*, §276; the French has “*adhésion*” for Nietzsche’s *Ja-sagender*, Kaufmann’s “Yes-sayer”; I will, however, continue to translate the French as “adhesion.”—Trans.
13. *Gay Science*, §341.
14. *Ibid.*, §294.
15. *Ibid.*, §304.
16. *Ibid.*, §122.
17. *Ibid.*, §326.
18. *Ibid.*
19. All citations in this and the next paragraph are from *Beyond*, §260; Henry’s emphasis in this paragraph’s last citation; translation modified in the second citation.—Trans.
20. Henry’s emphasis, in this and the previous citation.—Trans.
21. *Genealogy*, bk. 1, §3; my emphasis.
22. *Ibid.*, bk. 1, §10; Nietzsche’s emphasis.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Bien, bon est le bonheur*.—Trans.
25. *Beyond*, §260.
26. *Genealogy*, bk. 1, §10.
27. *Genealogy*, preface, §1 (here the French translation of Nietzsche is much closer to Henry’s preceding paraphrase; literally: “we can do nothing but take ourselves for other than what we are”—Trans.).
28. *Beyond*, §281.
29. *Ibid.*, §287; my emphasis.
30. *Ibid.*, §287; Nietzsche’s emphasis.
31. *Ibid.*, §260.
32. “The word ‘good’ was definitely *not* linked from the first and by necessity to ‘unegoistic’ actions” (*Genealogy*, bk. 1, §2).
33. *Gay Science*, §3.
34. *Beyond*, §261.
35. *Gay Science*, §324; Nietzsche’s emphasis.
36. *Ibid.*, §319.
37. *Ibid.*, §335.
38. *Birth*, §13.
39. *Birth*, “Attempt at a Self-Criticism,” §2.
40. *Genealogy*, bk. 3, §24.
41. *Ibid.*, bk. 3, §25; my emphasis (in the second citation).

42. *Beyond*, §207.
43. *Genealogy*, bk. 3, §25.
44. *Birth*, §17.
45. *Beyond*, §45.
46. *Gay Science*, §123.
47. *Beyond*, §204.
48. *Ibid.*, §205.
49. *Birth*, §8.
50. *Ibid.*, §10.
51. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche still says that will is “the opposite of the aesthetic” (§6), and that is why music can only be its reproduction. Later, life’s essence will, on the contrary, constitute beauty itself: “we . . . beautiful . . . ones” (*Genealogy*, bk. 1, §10).
52. *Birth*, “Attempt at a Self-Criticism,” §§4, 5.
53. *Birth*, §4; the expression “pleasurable illusion” is taken from Schopenhauer.
54. *Ibid.*, §21; my emphasis.
55. Henry, at least according to Schlecht’s edition of Nietzsche, is mistaken in saying that Nietzsche uses “the same word” here, but the basic idea is the same.—Trans.
56. *Birth*, §6.
57. *Genealogy*, bk. 3, §15.
58. *Birth*, §3.
59. *Ibid.*, §1.
60. *Ibid.*, §4.
61. *Genealogy*, bk. 3, §6.
62. *Birth*, §24.
63. *Ibid.*, §4.
64. *Ibid.*, §21; my emphasis.
65. *Beyond*, §198 (the French (mis)translation [literally, “the danger that menaces the person from the interior”] makes Henry’s subsequent claims more easily comprehensible, but Kaufmann’s English is much closer to the original German [der *Gefährlichkeit*, in welcher die einzelne Person mit sich selbst lebt]—Trans.).
66. *Birth*, §5; my emphasis.
67. *Ibid.*, §16.
68. *Ibid.*, §10.
69. *Ibid.*, §4; my emphasis.
70. *Ibid.*, §9; my emphasis.
71. *Ibid.*, §8; my emphasis.
72. *Ibid.*, §1.
73. *Ibid.*, §4.
74. *Ibid.*, §5; translation modified.
75. *Gay Science*, §99; Nietzsche’s emphasis.
76. *Beyond*, §212.
77. *Ibid.*, §206.
78. *Gay Science*, §335; cf. §116: “Morality trains the individual to be a function of the herd and to ascribe value to himself only as a function.”
79. *Ibid.*, §338; my emphasis. As for those doing the pitying, to respond to the first part of Nietzsche’s question, it is clear that they are condemned by the same philosophy of the individual. For what each of them desires is “to lose one’s *own* way in order to come to the assistance of a neighbor,” the reason being that “our ‘own way’ is too hard and demanding” so that “we do not really mind escaping from it—and from our very own conscience” (§338). Here again one must admire Nietzsche’s genius in prophesying the coming of these times that emphasize the political interest

for the general, the collective, social, historical, ethnic—in short, everything that throws the individual out of himself, actually presupposing his inner distress and emptiness. In the same passage Nietzsche also recognizes the right of a true compassion, i.e., the authentic suffering of one individual in the presence of the suffering of another, so that abandoning themselves to their inner emotion, they share “not suffering but joy” with their “friends.” Here, as in many other places, one can see the incontestable return of Christian values.

80. *Birth*, §§8, 9.

81. *Ibid.*, §8.

82. *Ibid.*, §24.

83. *Ibid.*, §8; my emphasis.

84. *Ibid.*, §9.

85. My emphasis.

86. A good example of this misunderstanding is Heidegger's statement “‘The great noon’ is the time of the brightest brightness, namely, of the consciousness that unconditionally and in every respect has become conscious of itself as that knowing which consists in deliberately willing the will to power as the Being of whatever is” (*Question Concerning Technology*, 102). This text must be classified with the long series that consciously or not, tends to falsify the new philosophy of life issued from Schopenhauer, which found its first striking formulation in Nietzsche, by reducing it to a metaphysics of representivity, which it completely and explicitly opposes.

87. *Beyond*, §225; my emphasis; translation modified.

88. *Birth*, §15.

89. *Birth*, “Attempt at a Self-Criticism,” §2; Nietzsche's emphasis.

90. *Beyond*, §192.

91. *Will to Power*, §481; translation altered.

92. *Genealogy*, bk. 3, §12.

93. *Beyond*, §11; *Birth*, “Attempt at a Self-Criticism,” §5.

94. *Genealogy*, bk. 3, §12. (The French translation has roughly: “perspectives and interpretations of an affective nature.” Henry has put the whole in italics, and I have tried to capture the sense of that by emphasizing Kaufmann's “affective”—Trans.)

95. *Ibid.*; my emphasis on “and the more affects . . . to observe one thing.”

96. *Birth*, §16.

97. Section 52 is in vol. 1; chap. 39 in vol. 2.—Trans.

98. Schopenhauer, *World*, 2, 449.

99. *Will to Power*, §14.

100. Heidegger, *Technology*, 71–72; my emphasis.

101. Cf. p. 248.

102. *Technology*, 79; my emphasis.

103. Heidegger, *End of Philosophy*, 63.

104. *End of Philosophy*, 63; my emphasis on “as.”

105. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 3, 222.

106. Heidegger, *Technology*, 71–72; my emphasis.

107. *Technology*, 84.

108. *Technology*, 87 (all German words in brackets are inserted by Lovitt—Trans.).

Chapter 9

1. “An Autobiographical Study,” *SE* 20, 32. (All citations in this chapter are from Freud unless otherwise noted.—Trans.)

2. “We . . . are accustomed to operate with it [the unconscious] as though it were something palpable to the senses” (*Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, *SE* 16, 279).

3. “The Unconscious,” *SE* 14, 172.

4. “An Outline of Psychoanalysis,” *SE* 23, 157.

5. Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, §54.

6. *Drive and representation*: This translation will use “drive” for Freud's *Trieb* (French *pulsion*) except in direct quotes from *SE* where it is usually translated as “instinct.” There is an ongoing debate, especially in Kant scholarship, about whether to translate *Vorstellung* as “presentation” or “representation.” This translation will use the latter, as does the French, except in direct quotes from *SE*, where it is usually “idea” (see, however, editor's note on *Vorstellung*, “The Unconscious,” *SE* 14, 201, where “idea” is abandoned in favor of “presentation”).—Trans.

7. *Introductory Lectures*, *SE* 16, 294–95.

8. “An Outline of Psychoanalysis,” *SE* 23, 159.

9. This is why Freud's belief in science and what really must be called his scientism are in direct contradiction with his most profound intuition.

10. “Everything that is there,” from *tout ce qui est là*, is probably a reference to Heidegger's *Da-sein*, often translated in French as “être-là” (being-there).—Trans.

11. “Destiny” (*destin*) probably refers to Freud's article “*Triebe und Triebchicksale*” (“Instincts and their Vicissitudes”), whose usual French translation is “*Pulsions et destins des pulsions*” (literally, “Drives and Drive-Destinies”).—Trans.

12. See p. 60.

13. “A Note on the Unconscious in Psychoanalysis,” *SE* 12, 260; my emphasis.

14. On this topic, see the author's *Essence of Manifestation* (bk. 1, §1) and for this same situation in Kant, Chapter 4.

15. According to German romanticism, every great esthetic creation is the discovery of precisely this hidden Identity between spirit and nature, as Anne Henry has skillfully shown in relationship to what is in this regard the exemplary work of Marcel Proust.

16. Dalbier, 2, 34.

17. *Ibid.*, 2, 12; my emphasis.

18. *Ibid.*, 1, 80.

19. Cf. *ibid.*, 1, 454ff.

20. Frink, 166–67.

21. Husserl has decisively shown that imagination is a mode of intuitive con-

sciousness that differs eidetically from speaking consciousness, the latter being empty and necessarily non-intuitive; cf. *Logical Investigations* 1, “Expression and Meaning” (Investigation 1).

22. In *Der Satz vom Grund*, Heidegger proposed a commentary on this verse of Angelus Silesius (*Cherubinischer Wandersmann*, bk. 1, no. 289). Since it does not account for the second verse, which explicitly excludes ek-stasis from the inner work of being, this commentary cannot in my opinion exhibit the way in which Angelus Silesius’s words relate to the original essence of life: the rose, in this case.

23. “Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria,” *SE* 7, 78.

24. *Introductory Lectures*, *SE* 15, 67.

25. “A Note on the Unconscious,” *SE* 12, 262–63; my emphasis.

26. *Ibid.*

27. “The Unconscious,” *SE* 14, 178.

28. *Ibid.*, 177.

29. *Ibid.*, 168; my emphasis. Here we find confirmed the earlier statement that the fact of being conscious or not is merely added to these “processes.”

30. *Introductory Lectures*, *SE* 15, 293–94, 298; my emphasis. (Translation altered by Henry.—Trans.)

31. “*Désir*” is the French translation of both the traditionally more philosophical *Begierde* (desire) and Freud’s *Wunsch* (wish); thus there is a continuity in the French text, which cannot be reproduced in English without losing the associations specific to each of those fields.—Trans.

32. *Interpretation of Dreams*, *SE* 5, 565–66.

33. “Ego”: here once again, the word is *moi* (literally, me), the French translation of Freud’s *das Ich* (literally, the I; invariably translated in English as “ego”); in philosophical contexts, *moi* is usually translated as “self.”—Trans.

34. “The Unconscious,” *SE* 14, 177.

35. Freud’s note in Saussure’s *La méthode psychanalytique*, which criticized Freud on this point (Saussure, 17).

36. “The Unconscious,” *SE* 14, 177–78. The note on Saussure also recognizes “the right to speak of unconscious feelings, as long as one remembers that it is really an abbreviation.”

37. *Introductory Lectures*, *SE* 16, 409.

38. *Ibid.*, 403–4.

39. Here again we find the situation already analyzed in great detail in regard to Schopenhauer, according to which affectivity in general is merely the effect of a more primitive conatus, whose vicissitudes are merely reflected in the tonalities of that affect. We have also seen that Freud explicitly designated his “drives” as the equivalent of Schopenhauer’s will.

40. Cf. “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” *SE* 14, 121–22: “An ‘instinct’ appears to us as a concept on the frontier between the mental and the somatic.”

41. *Ibid.*, 120, 118.

42. *Ibid.*, 119.

43. *Ibid.*, 120. As a representative, the drive is defined, precisely, by its being the only representative of the internal excitations.

44. *Ibid.*, 134.

45. *Ibid.*, 118.

46. “Repression,” *SE* 14, 146; my emphasis.

47. “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” *SE* 14, 118–19.

48. This translation uses “investment” to translate Freud’s *Besetzung* except in direct quotations from *SE* where it is usually translated as “cathexis.”—Trans.

49. “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” *SE* 14, 120.

50. *Introductory Lectures*, *SE* 16, 356.

51. “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” *SE* 14, 120–21.

52. “Repression,” *SE* 14, 153; translation modified.

53. *Ibid.*, 146.

54. “The Economic Problem of Masochism,” *SE* 19, 160.

55. *Introductory Lectures*, *SE* 16, 405.

56. *Ibid.*

57. *Ibid.*, 407–9.

58. *Ibid.*, 408; my emphasis. (Bracketed words are added to conform with the French translation.—Trans.)

59. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, *SE* 18, 38.

60. *Ibid.*, 36.

61. *Ibid.*, 52, 54, 60, 50; the same theme occurs in “An Outline of Psychoanalysis” (*SE* 23, 148): “The aim of [Eros] is to establish ever greater unities and to preserve them thus—in short, to bind together.”

62. On this subject, see Ricoeur, 312–15, especially 319: “Must one go so far as to say that the principle of constancy and the death instinct coincide? But then the death instinct, introduced precisely in order to account for the instinctual character of the compulsion to repeat, is not beyond the pleasure principle, but is somehow identical with it.” In this remarkable work, one of the few to deal philosophically with Freud, Ricoeur operates on presuppositions radically different from ours: the symbolic universe is the indispensable medium for self-knowledge, which can only be hermeneutic. In this way, the rights of intentional consciousness are saved. Affect itself has meaning only insofar as it is bound to a representation: is it not itself a representative of the drives? The concept of “representative,” whose importance, particularly in the “Metaphysics,” has been shown by Ricoeur, appears to be the means to reintroduce Freudian energetics back into a psychology essentially defined by representation (cf. Ricoeur, 150). But then isn’t the originality of a thought of life lost?

63. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, *SE* 18, 57; Freud’s emphasis.

64. Ibid., 55.

65. As we have seen, "The Economic Problem of Masochism" did recognize a pleasure bound up with the increase of tensions.

66. When posterity, what might be called popular Freudianism, took psychoanalysis to be a liberation of sexuality, instincts, and thus of life, it did not know that in this case "liberation" meant suppression.

67. *Introductory Lectures*, SE 16, 293.

68. Ibid., 15, 76.

69. "Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis," SE 11, 31. Insofar as a "complex" is an affective support of representations bound by that support, it is not "unconscious" but rather a latent source of potential representations whose "thematic" unity is that source, i.e., affect itself.

70. "The Unconscious," SE 14, 187.

71. *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, SE 6, 258–59.

Potentiality

1. Descartes, Third Meditation, *Writings* 2, 32.

2. Fourth set of Replies, *Writings* 2, 172; my emphasis.

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